Divine Flashes of Ḥusayn

Sermons and Sayings of the Grandson of Prophet Muhammad

(*Lamaᶜāt al-Ḥusayn*)

Compiled by
Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī

Translated by
Tawus Raja

Great Books of the Islamic World

About the Book:

"People are the slaves of wealth, and the religion is vainly on their tongues. They maintain it so long as they have productive livelihoods. But when they are tested by a trial, the religious are few."

–from the book

Muslims were appalled to see Ḥusayn, the pious grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad, being slaughtered in the land of Karbalā half a century after the Prophet's demise.

Who was Ḥusayn? Why did he rise? Why was he killed? And what was his message?

It is best to learn about him from his own words. This treatise presents a short collection of the sermons, sayings, and letters of Ḥusayn. The content has been collected from the most prominent and original Muslim sources of narration and history.

About the Compiler:

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (1926–1995) was a Muslim thinker and mystic, who wrote on a wide range of Islamic sciences. Despite the large volume of his works, he repeatedly identified this small treatise as the best of them all, "for it is entirely the words of the Imām."

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Transliteration

Arabic Letters

symbol	transliteration
ء	ʼ
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʻ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
و	w
ه	h
ي	y
ة	ah; at
ى	á

Long Vowels

ا	ā
و	ū
ي	ī

Short Vowels

َ	a
ُ	u
ِ	i

Persian Letters

پ	p
چ	ch
ژ	zh
گ	g

Translator's Introduction

O soul at peace, return unto thy Lord, well-pleased and well-pleasing.
Enter thou among My servants! Enter thou My Paradise!
(The Holy Qur'ān, 89:27-30)

This book is the translation of a short collection of sermons, sayings, and letters by Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī over the last six months of his life. The book provides a first-hand representation of Islam in general and Shīʿism in particular, as it consists of the sayings of Prophet Muḥammad's grandson and the third Shīʿite Imām (i.e. leader). It provides more insight into political thought and reform in Islam, and depicts the history of the Middle East and the Umayyad caliphs in the seventh century CE.

The narrations were compiled from the most authentic books of Sunni and Shīʿite Muslims, by a great Shīʿite scholar of the last century, the late Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (d. 1995). The translator's notes have been marked by [tr] in order to distinguish them from the notes by the author. References have been provided by the author, though the editions and page numbers have been researched by the translator. Some of the linguistic and literal explanations and notes of the author have not been translated due to not being applicable. The original Arabic texts of the narrations have also been included for those interested.

About Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī

Ḥusayn was born in Medina in year 4 AH (626 CE). His mother, Fāṭimah, was the Prophet Muḥammad's daughter, and his father, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, was the Prophet's cousin. Ḥusayn and his older brother, Ḥasan, were greatly cherished by the

Prophet during his life. In Shī'ism, 'Alī is the Prophet's successor and the first Imām, followed by his two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. There are abundant verses of the Qur'ān and Prophetic traditions that bear witness that the Prophet repeatedly and explicitly declared 'Alī and his children as his successors, and that they are infallible leaders like the Prophet himself.[1]

However, when the Prophet Muḥammad passed away in 11 AH (632), most Muslims decided to follow one of his companions, Abū Bakr, as his successor (caliph). Abū Bakr's caliphate was followed by that of 'Umar and then 'Uthmān, who was killed by a protesting crowd of Muslims that were not happy with his governance. Thus, the masses rushed to 'Alī—after twenty-five years of silence and solitude—begging him to accept the caliphate.[2]

'Alī based his rule on that of the Prophet, restored economic justice and social equality, and abolished all racial and political privileges. The noble Islamic and humane values and practices of 'Alī were hard to tolerate for the previously favored and privileged individuals. Thus, he was forced into three internal wars during the first three years of his caliphate, and was finally assassinated by the extremist Kharijites in 40 AH (661).

'Alī made it clear why he took the caliphate in his hands by these powerful words:

أَمَا وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، لَوْ لا حُضُورُ الْحَاضِرِ وَقِيامُ الْحُجَّةِ بِوُجُودِ النَّاصِرِ، وَمَا أَخَذَ اللّهُ عَلَى الْعُلَمَاءِ أَنْ لا يُقَارُّوا عَلَى كِظَّةِ ظَالِمٍ وَلا سَغَبِ مَظْلُومٍ، لَأَلْقَيْتُ حَبْلَهَا عَلَى غَارِبِها، وَلَسَقَيْتُ آخِرَهَا بِكَأْسِ أَوَّلِها، وَلَأَلْفَيْتُمْ دُنْيَاكُمْ هذِهِ أَزْهَدَ عِنْدِي مِنْ عَفْطَةِ عَنْزٍ.

Lo! By Him who split the seeds [to grow] and created the souls, if the crowd of people had not come unto me, if the presence of supporters had not established a conclusive argument against me, and if God had not taken an oath from the people of knowledge to not sit back at the gluttony of an oppressor and the starving of the oppressed, I

> would have surely cast the bridle of caliphate on its back [leaving it on its own], and would have given its future the same treatment that I gave its past. Then you would have found out that to me, this world of yours is less than the sneezing of a goat.[3]

In another occasion at the beginning of his caliphate, Ibn 'Abbās saw him stitching his shoe. He asked Ibn 'Abbās, "How much is the pair worth?" He replied, "It is not worth anything." 'Alī said, "Even so, set a price for it." Ibn 'Abbās said, "Less than one dirham." Then 'Alī said,

وَاللهِ لَهِيَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ إِمْرَتِكُم، إِلَّا أَنْ أُقِيمَ حقّاً أو أَدْفَعَ باطِلاً.

> By God, this pair of shoes is more dear to me than ruling over you, except for a right that I establish or a wrong that I ward off.[4]

The above clearly explains the political philosophy and practice of all Shī'ite Imāms, including the rise of Ḥusayn, and the occultation of the twelfth and last Imām.

After 'Alī's death, his first son Ḥasan ruled for approximately six months. However, he was forced into signing a peace treaty with Mu'āwiyah, whereby the latter would take over the caliphate and rule over the Islamic nation based on a set of conditions determined by Ḥasan. Among those conditions were that Mu'āwiyah shall not appoint an heir for himself, 'Alī shall not be cursed or sworn at in the congregations, and his Shī'ites (literally, "followers") shall be guaranteed security and not be prosecuted. However, once Mu'āwiyah took over the caliphate, he delivered a Friday sermon near Kūfah stating:

> By God, truly I did not fight with you so that you perform the prayer, the fasting, the pilgrimage, or the almsgiving. You will surely do that [yourselves], but I fought you so that I may rule over you, and that God has given me despite your displeasure. Lo! Indeed I had made certain promises

> and commitments to Ḥasan, but now I trample all of them under my feet, and I will not abide by any of them.[5]

However, Ḥasan did not break his treaty, and returned to Medina for nine years of silence and solitude, much like his father after the Prophet's demise. When Ḥasan passed away in 50 AH (690), the Shī'ites in Iraq wrote to Ḥusayn, expressing their eagerness to break out of their allegiance with Mu'āwiyah, and pay their allegiance to Ḥusayn. Ḥusayn rejected their offer. He told them that Mu'āwiyah's treaty was binding as long as he was alive, but he would look into their offer after Mu'āwiyah's death. Therefore Ḥusayn followed the same approach as Ḥasan, and lived under Mu'āwiyah's rule for another ten years.[6]

When Mu'āwiyah died in year 60 AH (680), Ḥusayn refused to pay allegiance to Mu'āwiyah's son, Yazīd. Yazīd wrote to the governor of Medina, Walīd ibn 'Utbah ibn Abī Sufyān:

> Take Ḥusayn's oath of allegiance to me right away. Should he refuse, behead him and send me his head.[7]

Ḥusayn told Walīd:

إنّا أهلُ بيتِ النُّبوّةِ ومَعْدِنُ الرِّسالةِ ومُخْتَلَفُ المَلائكةِ، وبنا فَتَحَ اللّهُ وبنا خَتَمَ اللّهُ. ويَزيدُ رَجُلٌ فاسِقٌ شارِبُ الخَمْرِ، وَقاتِلُ النَّفْسِ المُحَرَّمَةِ، مُعْلِنٌ بالفِسْقِ، وَمِثْلي لا يُبايعُ مِثْلَهُ.

> We belong to the house of prophethood, the source of messengership, and the place where the angels frequent. God began [Islam] by us, and will end [it] by us. But Yazīd is a corrupt person who drinks wine, kills the innocent souls, and openly breaks the law [of God]. A person like me would not pay allegiance to a person like him.[8]

And he told Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam:

وعَلَى الإسْلامِ السَّلامُ إذ قَدْ بُلِيَتِ الأُمّةُ بِراعٍ مِثْلِ يَزيدَ.

> One should bid farewell to Islam if the nation were to be trialed by a ruler like Yazīd.[9]

Unlike his father, Yazīd was not even committed to the apparent aspects of Islam. Not to mention that during Mu'āwiyah's caliphate, the Islamic government and nation had become more distant from the Prophet's tradition day by day, and by the time of Mu'āwiyah's death, there was an immense gap between the condition of religion at the time and that of early Islam. The noble Islamic values had faded away in the society to a large extent, many innovations had been introduced in the religion, and a large number of unauthentic narrations had been spread among the people. The young generation who had not seen the Prophet was ignorant of real Islam.[10]

Walīd was not the kind of person to kill Ḥusayn. It would have had great consequences for him among the people—not to mention his fear of its consequences in the hereafter. Thus, Ḥusayn left Medina for Mecca for a more secure and peaceful environment. When the people of Kūfah heard of Ḥusayn's refusing to pay allegiance to Yazīd, they wrote to him and urged him to depart for Kūfah and become their leader. Before long, Ḥusayn had received twelve thousand letters from them, insisting on their request. Hence, he sent his cousin, Muslim ibn 'Aqīl, as his representative to Kūfah. Muslim was welcomed in Kūfah, and eighteen thousand people gave him their oath of allegiance to Ḥusayn. He wrote to Ḥusayn informing him of the people's readiness and commitment to receive and support him.[11]

That is how Ḥusayn departed Mecca for Kūfah, along with his family and companions. In the meantime, Yazīd was informed of the movements in Kūfah, the inclination of its people toward Ḥusayn, and Ḥusayn's leaving Medina. Thus he sent 'Ubayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād as the new governor of Kūfah, and ordered him that Muslim should be imprisoned, killed, or exiled. Ibn Ziyād succeeded in restoring the order in Kūfah, dispersed the people from around Muslim by force, fear, temptation, and deceit, and finally arrested and killed Muslim just about when Ḥusayn was leaving Mecca for Kūfah. Even the two small chil-

dren of Muslim were not spared from being killed. In addition to that, Ibn Ziyād arrested and killed a number of Ḥusayn's envoys to Kūfah, including Ḥusayn's brother by milk, and imprisoned many of the Shīʿites in Kūfah.[12]

Not only in Medina, but also in Mecca, Ḥusayn was put under pressure to pay allegiance to Yazīd. One of the reasons why he did not stay in Mecca was so that if there were to be any bloodshed, it would not be in the sanctuary of the House of God, which is supposed to be a place of universal security. When he departed Mecca, he did not have anywhere to go better than Kūfah. He was under chase by Yazīd, who had ordered his governors to either kill Ḥusayn, or make him pay allegiance to Yazīd.[13]

Hearing about Ḥusayn's journey toward Kūfah, Ibn Ziyād sent armies led by Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Riyāḥī and ʿUmar ibn Saʿd, and ordered them to stop Ḥusayn before he reaches Kūfah, and block him from having access to water (i.e. the Euphrates). Having seen the people of Kūfah changing sides, Ḥusayn told ʿUmar ibn Saʿd to let him return to the place where he came from or go elsewhere in peace. Ibn Ziyād rejected Ḥusayn's proposal, and wrote to ʿUmar that Ḥusayn should either submit or be killed.[14]

ʿUmar ibn Saʿd and his army of several thousand men—mostly from Kūfah—attacked Ḥusayn and his companions on Muḥarram 10 (ʿĀshūrāʾ), 61 AH (October 9, 680). By the afternoon, all of the seventy-two men of Ḥusayn's relatives and companions were killed. Among those killed were Ḥusayn's infant son and several other children. The only man survivor was Ḥusayn's second son, ʿAlī (the fourth Shīʿite Imām), who was severely ill. The womenfolk of Ḥusayn's army were captured as slaves and sent to Kūfah and then to Syria along with the heads of the martyrs.[15]

Ḥusayn's family, especially his sister Zaynab and his son ʿAlī, delivered vehement informative sermons in Kūfah and Syria that changed the people's view of the Umayyad rulers. Ḥusayn's death was extremely detrimental to the Umayyad dynasty, and eventually led to its fall. It was an awakening shock for the Muslims to see the grandson of their Prophet being

killed innocent, thirsty, and without supporter. Within a few years, several uprisings against the Umayyad rule occurred within the Islamic nation.

Ḥusayn's martyrdom became an important and manifest part of the Shīʿite heritage and history. Its anniversary is remembered by the Shīʿites every year, who gather to mourn and lament the event. Unfortunately, sometimes due to personal interjections, these ceremonial events take certain forms that are against the reason and religion, while Ḥusayn's noble movement should not be tainted by such extreme behaviors.

Perhaps the most vivid characteristic of Ḥusayn in his movement was that he was a liberated soul. This was his message to the army of Yazīd—and to all humankind—that "If you have no religion and you fear not the Hereafter, then be liberated souls in your life in this world."[16] A liberated soul is one that does not fear and is not tempted by anything other than the truth. It is only concerned with acting upon its duty toward the truth. It is so rich and strong from within that it is not moved by the blames of those who blame, or the admirations of those who admire. A liberated soul takes the word of wisdom from anyone that it may be. It is free from every prejudice and predisposition based on titles, labels, and appearances. A liberated soul is one that has realized this advice of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

وَأَكْرِمْ نَفْسَكَ عَنْ كُلِّ دَنِيَّةٍ وَإِنْ سَاقَتْكَ إِلَى الرَّغَائِبِ، فَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَعْتَاضَ بِمَا تَبْذُلُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ عِوَضاً.

> Honor your soul from every base quality, even if it takes you to desirable things, for you can never be compensated for a loss of your self.[17]

Having a liberated soul is not about the freedom of indulging in one's whims and passions, but about freedom from false-

hood, and that entails commitment to the truth. It is not correct to translate Ḥusayn's narration as "*at least* be liberated souls", for the narration does not say so, and having a free and liberated soul is nothing to be belittled.

About the Author

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī was born in Tehran in 1345 AH (1926), and passed away in Mashhad in 1416 AH (1995). He pursued both religious and modern education until 1364 (1945), when he migrated to Qum for advanced religious studies. He studied there for seven years, followed by another seven years of studies in Najaf. Among his teachers were 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥujjat, Āyatullāh Burūjirdī, Shaykh Ḥusayn Ḥillī, Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim Khu'ī, and Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī.

Not only was he a matchless scholar who had mastered a wide range and a great depth of Islamic sciences, he was also highly spiritual. In spiritual wayfaring and journeying, he was a student of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Shaykh 'Abbās Qūchānī, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Gulpāyigānī, Shaykh Muḥammad Jawād Anṣārī, and most important of all, Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād. The author found Ḥaddād as a man of great spiritual stations and different from everyone else. The instructions and mastership of Ḥaddād eventually made another Ḥaddād out of the author.

In 1377 (1958), Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī returned to Iran to head the Qā'im Mosque in Tehran. In his twenty-three years of stay in Tehran, he actively sought social and political reform in order to bring about an Islamic society. After the Islamic revolution, the author moved to Mashhad in 1400 (1980), and dedicated himself to teaching and writing. He felt that with the people's revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, it was now the duty of the scholars to teach the people about real Islam and purify their beliefs and practices of that which is not genuine.

At the end, I am most grateful to the Almighty God for enabling me to carry out this task. I am also grateful to the means by which God provided His grace—all the individuals who helped, supported, and contributed to this work. I feel particularly indebted to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and wish for him a long life with health and success in every dimension. I ask God to accept this effort, forgive my shortcomings, and pardon me and my parents.

It is apt to close with a few lines that have been composed as a lamentation of Ḥusayn for himself:[18]

My Shīʿah, remember me when you have a drink of water.
My Shīʿah, cry for me for I am the lonely martyr.

O people, tell me what's my sin for deserving this murder?
It's the son of the Prophet that is being galloped over.

This is my little baby, someone gets him from his father;
Have you no mercy? He is dying out of thirst and hunger.

Then I saw that my baby is not breathing any longer;
My Shīʿah, were you there you would cry out of grief and anger.

My Akbar cut to pieces, was the son of your Messenger;
My Shīʿah, this is their way of obeying Allah's order.

Tawus Raja

Notes

[1] See the Hoy Qur'ān, 2:124, 3:59, 5:3, 55 and 67, 11:17, 13:7, 33:33, 42:23; 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr fī al-kitāb wa al-sunnah wa al-adab* (Beirut, 1977) in 11 vols.; Muslim ibn al-Ḥallāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr), 7:123; Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut, 1983), 5:321ff.; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl* (Beirut, 1989), 1:185ff. and 13:639ff. For works in English on Shī'ite beliefs and history, see S.M.Ḥ. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Shi'ite Islam* (Albany: SUNY, 1979), translated by S.H. Nasr; S.H.M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979); Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *al-Bâbu l-hâdî 'ashar: a treatise on the principles of Shī'ite theology* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1958), with commentary by Miqdād Fāḍil al-Ḥillī, translated by W.M. Miller; D. Donaldson, *The Shi'ite religion: a history of Islam in Persia and Irak* (New York: AMS Press, 1984).

[2] *Nahj al-balāghah* (Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ edition), Sermon 3.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Mufīd, *al-Irshād* (Beirut, 1993), 1:247; *Nahj al-balāghah*, Sermon 33.

[5] Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, 2:14; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāghah* (Cairo, 1959-), 16:46.

[6] Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī, *al-Imāmah wa al-siyāsah* (Qom, 1992), 1:187.

[7] Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Beirut, 1983), 44:326ff.

[8] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 44:235.

[9] *Ibid.*, 44:236.

[10] Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar* (Beirut: Dār al-Andulus, 1965), 3:67-68; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah* (Beirut, 1988), 8:250.

[11] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 44:333ff.; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 4:22ff. In another account, over thirty thousand people gave Muslim their oath of allegiance to Ḥusay; see Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa al-siyāsah*, 2:8.

[12] Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk* (Cairo, 1939), 4:265ff.; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 4:24ff.

[13] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 4:38.

[14] Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:313; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq* (Beirut, 1995), 45:52; Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa al-siyāsah*, 2:11ff.; Abū Ḥanīfah Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl* (Cairo, 1960), p. 250ff.

[15] Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:342ff.; Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 256ff.; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 4:65ff.

[16] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 45:51.

[17] *Nahj al-balāghah*, Letter 31.

[18] It has been narrated that Ḥusayn's daughter Sakīnah heard parts of these poems—particularly the first line—from her father when she passed out after hugging her father's dead body. The other lines were added later on. See Kafʿamī, *al-Miṣbāḥ* (Beirut, 1983), p. 741.

Introduction

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate
All praise is to God, the Lord of everyone
And there is no movement and no power save by God, the Supreme, the Magnificent

May the most ample mercies be upon the pure spirit of the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafá, his noble successor, 'Alī al-Murtaḍá, and his eleven chosen descendents. And especially upon the guardian of the contingent world, the Leader of the Time: Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, who directs the convoy of all existents with love toward the realm of unity and unconditionality of God, Glorified and Exalted He is.

وَ جَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ الزَّكَوٰةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ.

> And We made them leaders who guide by Our command, and We inspired in them the doing of good deeds, and to perform the prayer and pay the alms, and they were worshippers of Us [alone].[1]

The Imāmate of Imāms Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (peace be upon them) were during the darkest and most difficult times in terms of the oppression and dominance exercised by the unjust Umayyad rule. Repression, ignorance, hypocrisy and deceit had reached their climax. Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) described their time toward the end of his life as follows:

وَ اعْلَمُوا رَحِمَكُمُ اللّهُ! أَنَّكُمْ فِي زَمَانٍ الْقَآئِلُ فِيهِ بِالْحَقِّ قَلِيلٌ، وَاللِّسَانُ عَنِ الصِّدْقِ كَلِيلٌ، واللَّازِمُ لِلْحَقِّ ذَلِيلٌ. أَهْلُهُ مُعْتَكِفُونَ عَلَى الْعِصْيَانِ، مُصْطَلِحُونَ عَلَى الْإِدْهَانِ. فَتَاهُمْ عَارِمٌ، وَشَآئِبُهُمْ ءَاثِمٌ؛ وَعَالِمُهُمْ مُنَافِقٌ، وَقَارِئُهُمْ مُمَاذِقٌ؛ لَا يُعَظِّمُ صَغِيرُهُمْ كَبِيرَهُمْ، وَلَا يَعُولُ غَنِيُّهُمْ فَقِيرَهُمْ.

And know, may God have mercy on you, that you are living at a time when those who speak the truth are few, the tongues are slow to utter it, and those who adhere to it are disgraced. The people of this time have resided in disobedience and agreed upon negligence. The youth among them are wicked, the old are sinful, the learned are hypocrites, and the reciters [of the Qur'ān] are sycophants. The young do not respect the elders, and the rich do not sustain the poor.[2]

Not only these two noble Imāms lived relatively long, but each of them was Imām for about ten years. Thus, one would expect to find thousands of traditions, sermons and speeches from them on various subjects, such as the exegesis (*tafsīr*) of the Qur'ān. However what is reported from them is only one or two narrations in law, a few more on exegesis, and a few sermons and speeches that are extremely short and concise.

This is while thousands of unauthentic and apocryphal traditions in support of the government of the time have been reported from figures like Abū Hurayrah and others. Therefore, it must have been that either the people could not benefit from the Imāms due to the tense and difficult situations, or that their speeches and traditions have been lost and destroyed due to the fear and insecurity of the narrators. As a result, the later generations did not receive the words of these two Imāms.

There are a few sermons and speeches reported from the Master of the Martyrs (Imām Ḥusayn, peace be upon him), that teach us lessons of liberty, wisdom, faith, and certitude. The speeches show that they have emanated from the source of Guardianship (*wilāyah*):

وَ إِنَّا لَأُمَرَاءُ الْكَلَامِ، وَفِينَا تَنَشَّبَتْ عُرُوقُهُ، وَعَلَيْنَا تَهَدَّلَتْ غُصُونُهُ.

And we are truly the masters of speech; its roots are grounded in us and its branches are hanging over us.[3]

These roots and branches of speech that they possess point at the roots and branches of meanings and contents. It is very apt to have the speeches of Imām Ḥusayn written on panels and flags along with expressive translations, and have them hung wherever a ceremony of lamentation and mourning is held for him. This way the participants would benefit visually from his words, in addition to their auditory benefits from the delivered lectures. Hence, they may remember the words of the Imām and set them as guideline and framework in their lives. His speeches comprise a world of dignity, liberty, faith, forbearance and magnanimity.

It is for this cause that I, the nondescript author, am presenting the following collection of some of the speeches by the Master of the Martyrs (peace be upon him). They have been compiled from authentic sources that are mentioned below. I have not commented or elaborated on the speeches, but have only provided a translation for the purpose of brevity and concision.

It is expected of the devout students of universities and religious institutions to memorize the exact words and sermons of the Imām, and make use of them in their lectures and speeches, so that the minds of the public may be illuminated by the bright glitters of the light of Ḥusayn (peace be upon him). Hence, these precious jewels that we have inherited from the pen of the previous scholars and the blood of the martyrs may be transmitted to the next generations. May God reward our youth for their splendid efforts, and enhance their faith, self-restraint, knowledge and action.

May peace and mercy be upon us and them, and upon the righteous servants of God.

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī
Sanctified city of Mashhad, 10 Muḥarram 1402 (7 November 1982)

Sermons and Sayings

I seek refuge in God, from the repelled Satan
In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate
Peace be upon our master Muḥammad and his pure and immaculate progeny.
May their enemies be far from God's mercy forever.
And there is no movement and no power save by God, the Supreme, the Magnificent

1. Imām Ḥusayn's Sermon about Knowing God and Knowing One's Imām

The Master of the martyrs, Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (peace be upon them), delivered the following speech as a sermon for his companions:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَا خَلَقَ خَلْقَ اللهِ إِلَّا لِيَعْرِفُوهُ؛ فَإِذَا عَرَفُوهُ عَبَدُوهُ، وَاسْتَغْنَوْا بِعِبَادَتِهِ عَنْ عِبَادَةِ مَا سِوَاهُ.

O, people! Truly God did not create mankind but to know Him. When they know Him, they worship Him, and thus they become needless to worship other than Him.

Here someone asked, "O son of God's Messenger, what is the knowledge of God, the Exalted and All-Mighty?" The Imām replied,

فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ: يَابْنَ رَسُولِ اللّٰهِ! مَا مَعْرِفَةُ اللّٰهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ؟ فَقَالَ: مَعْرِفَةُ أَهْلِ كُلِّ زَمَانٍ، إِمَامَهُ الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِمْ طَاعَتُهُ.

It is the knowledge that the people of every period have of the Imām whom they must follow.[4]

2. His Sermon concerning Making Reform and the Cause of his Rise

There is a sermon of his where he criticizes how commanding good and forbidding evil have been abandoned, and unjust and oppressive rulers have come to power. There he talks in detail about the privation suffered by the oppressed, and the society's deviation from the truth. He also mentions that:

مَجَارِي الْأُمُورِ وَالْأَحْكَامِ عَلَى أَيْدِي الْعُلَمَآءِ بِاللّهِ، الْأُمَنَاءِ عَلَى حَلَالِهِ وَحَرَامِهِ.

The direction of affairs and rules should be in the hands of those who have knowledge of God, and who are trusted on what He has made lawful or unlawful.

And at the end of the sermon he says,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ مَا كَانَ مِنَّا تَنَافُساً فِي سُلْطَانٍ، وَلَا الْتِمَاساً مِنْ فُضُولِ الْحُطَامِ؛ وَلَكِنْ لِنُرِيَ الْمَعَالِمَ مِنْ دِينِكَ، وَنُظْهِرَ الْإِصْلَاحَ فِي بِلَادِكَ، وَيَأْمَنَ الْمَظْلُومُونَ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ، وَيُعْمَلَ بِفَرَآئِضِكَ وَسُنَنِكَ وَأَحْكَامِكَ. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَنْصُرُونَا وَتُنْصِفُونَا قَوِيَ الظَّلَمَةُ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَعَمِلُوا فِي إِطْفَآءِ نُورِ نَبِيِّكُمْ؛ وَحَسْبُنَا اللّهُ، وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا، وَإِلَيْهِ أَنَبْنَا، وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ.

O God! Thou truly knowest that what we did [our rise to command good and forbid evil, defend the oppressed and fight the oppressor] was neither a rivalry for power, nor seeking more of the petty wealth [of this world]. But it was to make known [or to see] the signs of Thy religion, and bring about reform in Thy cities, so that Thy servants who have been oppressed may live in security, and Thy decrees, customs and rules may be practiced.[5]

Now, if you [O, people] do not support us and do justice to us, the oppressors will gain power over you, and act toward putting down the light of your prophet. God is Sufficient for us; on Him we rely; unto Him we turn, and to Him is the return.[6]

3. His Will to Muḥammad ibn Ḥanafiyyah

The Imām wrote a will before leaving the noble city of Medina for Holy Mecca. He sealed it with his signet and handed it to his brother, Muḥammad ibn Ḥanafiyyah. Then the Imām bid farewell to his brother, and departed for Mecca in the middle of the night of 3 Sha'bān 60 (8 May 680), along with his entire household. The will was:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ. هَذَا مَا أَوْصَى بِهِ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي‌طَالِبٍ إِلَى أَخِيهِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَعْرُوفِ بِابْنِ الْحَنَفِيَّه:

إِنَّ الْحُسَيْنَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، جَآءَ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ عِنْدِ الْحَقِّ، وَأَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ وَالنَّارَ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ. إِنِّي لَمْ أَخْرُجْ أَشِراً وَلَا بَطِراً وَلَا مُفْسِداً وَلَا ظَالِماً وَإِنَّمَا خَرَجْتُ لِطَلَبِ الْإِصْلَاحِ فِي أُمَّةِ جَدِّي مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ؛ أُرِيدُ أَنْ ءَامُرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأَسِيرَ بِسِيرَةِ جَدِّي وَسِيرَةِ أَبِي عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. فَمَنْ قَبِلَنِي بِقَبُولِ الْحَقِّ فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَى بِالْحَقِّ، وَمَنْ رَدَّ عَلَيَّ هَذَا أَصْبِرُ حَتَّى يَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ بِالْحَقِّ؛ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ. وَهَذِهِ وَصِيَّتِي إِلَيْكَ يَا أَخِي؛ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ. وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى. وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. This is the will of Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib to his brother Muḥammad, known as Ibn Ḥanafiyyah:

Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī testifies that there is no deity but God; He is One, and there is no partner for Him. Muḥammad, peace be upon him and his family, is His servant and messenger, who came by truth from the Truth. The Paradise and the Hell are true. The Hour [i.e. the Day of Judgment] is coming, there is no doubt in it, and God raises up whoever is in the graves.

Certainly I am not departing [Medina] out of pleasure or haughtiness, or seeking corruption or oppression. I am only rising to make correction to the nation of my grandfather Muḥammad, peace be upon him and his family. I want to command good, forbid evil, and follow the path of my grandfather and the path of my father, ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him.

So whoever accepts me by accepting the truth, then God is the closest one to the truth. And whoever rejects me in this, then I shall have patience until God judges with truth between me and these people, and He is the best of judges.

This is my will to you, O brother. "My achievement is only by God; on Him I rely; and to Him I turn."[7] Peace be upon you and upon whoever follows the guidance; and there is no movement and no power save by God, the Supreme, the Magnificent.[8]

4. His Sermon where he Urges and Encourages People to do Righteous Deeds

Imām Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) delivered a sermon where he said,

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! نَافِسُوا فِي الْمَكَارِمِ، وَسَارِعُوا فِي الْمَغَانِمِ، وَلَا تَحْتَسِبُوا بِمَعْرُوفٍ لَمْ تَعْجَلُوا [تَعْجَلُوه]. وَاكْسِبُوا الْحَمْدَ بِالنُّجْحِ، وَلَا تَكْتَسِبُوا بِالْمَطَلِ ذَمّاً؛ فَمَهْمَا يَكُنْ لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَ أَحَدٍ صَنِيعَةٌ لَهُ رَأَى أَنَّهُ لَا يَقُومُ بِشُكْرِهَا فَاللَّهُ لَهُ بِمُكَافَأَتِهِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ أَجْزَلُ عَطَاءً وَأَعْظَمُ أَجْراً.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ حَوَائِجَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ؛ فَلَا تَمَلُّوا النِّعَمَ فَتَحُورَ [فَتَحُولَ] نِقَماً.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْمَعْرُوفَ مُكْسِبٌ حَمْداً، وَمُعْقِبٌ أَجْراً. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتُمُ الْمَعْرُوفَ رَجُلاً رَأَيْتُمُوهُ حَسَناً جَمِيلاً يَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ [وَيَفُوقُ الْعَالَمِينَ]؛ وَلَوْ رَأَيْتُمُ اللُّؤْمَ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ سَمِجاً [قَبِيحاً] مُشَوَّهاً تَنفِرُ مِنْهُ الْقُلُوبُ، وَتَغُضُّ دُونَهُ الْأَبْصَارُ.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! مَنْ جَادَ سَادَ؛ وَمَنْ بَخِلَ رَذِلَ. وَإِنَّ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ مَنْ أَعْطَى مَنْ لَا يَرْجُوهُ. وَإِنَّ أَعْفَى النَّاسِ مَنْ عَفَا عَنْ قُدْرَةٍ. وَإِنَّ أَوْصَلَ النَّاسِ مَنْ وَصَلَ مَنْ قَطَعَهُ. وَالْأُصُولُ عَلَى مَغَارِسِهَا بِفُرُوعِهَا تَسْمُو؛ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ لِأَخِيهِ خَيْراً وَجَدَهُ إِذَا قَدِمَ عَلَيْهِ غَداً. وَمَنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى بِالصَّنِيعَةِ إِلَى أَخِيهِ كَافَأَهُ بِهَا فِي وَقْتِ حَاجَتِهِ، وَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ مِنْ بَلَاءِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هُوَ أَكْثَرُ مِنْهُ. وَمَنْ نَفَّسَ كُرْبَةَ مُؤْمِنٍ فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرَبَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ. وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ؛ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ.

O, people! Compete for the exalted virtues, race for the treasured prizes, and do not count good that which you do not speed for. Earn praise by achievement, and do not earn rebuke by deferment. Whenever someone deems that the person to whom he has done good is not grateful for it, then God compensates his goodness, for His award is ampler and His reward is greater.

And know that the people's needs to you are among God's bounties upon you. So do not be frustrated by the bounties, lest they become penalties.[9]

And know that goodness earns praise, and is followed by reward. Were you to see goodness as a man, you would see it as a [most] pleasing and beautiful person. And were you to see baseness, you would see an ugly [displeasing,] and repellent person, whom the hearts detest and the eyes avoid.

O, people! He who is generous becomes a master, and he who is closefisted becomes abased. The most generous person is he who gives to a person in whom he has no hope [of paying back]; the most forgiving person is he who forgives while he has power [to avenge]; and the most connective person is he who connects with those who have cut off from him.

The trunks [of trees] are based on their roots, and grow through their branches. Likewise, whoever hastens in doing good to his brother [has planted a tree of spirituality, and] will find it when he comes to it tomorrow. Whoever aims

Certainly I am not departing [Medina] out of pleasure or haughtiness, or seeking corruption or oppression. I am only rising to make correction to the nation of my grandfather Muḥammad, peace be upon him and his family. I want to command good, forbid evil, and follow the path of my grandfather and the path of my father, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him.

So whoever accepts me by accepting the truth, then God is the closest one to the truth. And whoever rejects me in this, then I shall have patience until God judges with truth between me and these people, and He is the best of judges.

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4. His Sermon where he Urges and Encourages People to do Righteous Deeds

Imām Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) delivered a sermon where he said,

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! نَافِسُوا فِي الْمَكَارِمِ، وَسَارِعُوا فِي الْمَغَانِمِ، وَلَا تَحْتَسِبُوا بِمَعْرُوفٍ لَمْ تَعْجَلُوا [تَعْجَلُوه]. وَاكْسِبُوا الْحَمْدَ بِالنُّجْحِ، وَلَا تَكْتَسِبُوا بِالْمَطَلِ ذَمّاً؛ فَمَهْمَا يَكُنْ لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَ أَحَدٍ صَنِيعَةٌ لَهُ رَأى أَنَّهُ لَا يَقُومُ بِشُكْرِهَا فَاللَّهُ لَهُ بِمُكَافَاتِهِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ أَجْزَلُ عَطَاءً وَأَعْظَمُ أَجْراً.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ حَوَائِجَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ؛ فَلَا تَمَلُّوا النِّعَمَ فَتَحُورَ [فَتَحُولَ] نِقَماً.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْمَعْرُوفَ مُكْسِبٌ حَمْداً، وَمُعْقِبٌ أَجْراً. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتُمُ الْمَعْرُوفَ رَجُلاً رَأَيْتُمُوهُ حَسَناً جَمِيلاً يَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ [وَيَفُوقُ الْعَالَمِينَ]؛ وَلَوْ رَأَيْتُمُ اللُّؤْمَ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ سَمِجاً [قَبِيحاً] مُشَوَّهاً تَنْفِرُ مِنْهُ الْقُلُوبُ، وَتَغُضُّ دُونَهُ الْأَبْصَارُ.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! مَنْ جَادَ سَادَ؛ وَمَنْ بَخِلَ رَذِلَ. وَإِنَّ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ مَنْ أَعْطَى مَنْ لَا يَرْجُوهُ. وَإِنَّ أَعْفَى النَّاسِ مَنْ عَفَا عَنْ قُدْرَةٍ. وَإِنَّ أَوْصَلَ النَّاسِ مَنْ وَصَلَ مَنْ قَطَعَهُ. وَالْأُصُولُ عَلَى مَغَارِسِهَا بِفُرُوعِهَا تَسْمُو؛ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ لِأَخِيهِ خَيْراً وَجَدَهُ إِذَا قَدِمَ عَلَيْهِ غَداً. وَمَنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى بِالصَّنِيعَةِ إِلَى أَخِيهِ كَافَأَهُ بِهَا فِي وَقْتِ حَاجَتِهِ، وَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ مِنْ بَلَاءِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هُوَ أَكْثَرُ مِنْهُ. وَمَنْ نَفَّسَ كُرْبَةَ مُؤْمِنٍ فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرَبَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ. وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ؛ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ.

O, people! Compete for the exalted virtues, race for the treasured prizes, and do not count good that which you do not speed for. Earn praise by achievement, and do not earn rebuke by deferment. Whenever someone deems that the person to whom he has done good is not grateful for it, then God compensates his goodness, for His award is ampler and His reward is greater.

And know that the people's needs to you are among God's bounties upon you. So do not be frustrated by the bounties, lest they become penalties.[9]

And know that goodness earns praise, and is followed by reward. Were you to see goodness as a man, you would see it as a [most] pleasing and beautiful person. And were you to see baseness, you would see an ugly [displeasing,] and repellent person, whom the hearts detest and the eyes avoid.

O, people! He who is generous becomes a master, and he who is closefisted becomes abased. The most generous person is he who gives to a person in whom he has no hope [of paying back]; the most forgiving person is he who forgives while he has power [to avenge]; and the most connective person is he who connects with those who have cut off from him.

The trunks [of trees] are based on their roots, and grow through their branches. Likewise, whoever hastens in doing good to his brother [has planted a tree of spirituality, and] will find it when he comes to it tomorrow. Whoever aims

God in a good that he does to his brother, then God will pay him back when he is in need, and He will turn away from him the afflictions of this world, much more than the good that he did. Whoever resolves the sorrow of a believer, God will resolve for him the sorrows of this world and the Hereafter. Whoever does good, God will do good to him, and God loves the good-doers.[10]

5. His Advice to the Sinners

It is narrated that a man came to Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī (peace be upon them) and said, "I am a sinful person, and cannot refrain from sinning. So give me some advice!"

The Imām (peace be upon him) told him,

جَآءَهُ رَجُلٌ وَقَالَ: أَنَا رَجُلٌ عَاصٍ، وَلَا أَصْبِرُ عَنِ الْمَعْصِيَةِ؛ فَعِظْنِي بِمَوْعِظَةٍ!
فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: افْعَلْ خَمْسَةَ أَشْيَآءَ؛ وَأَذْنِبْ مَا شِئْتَ!
فَأَوَّلُ ذَلِكَ: لَا تَأْكُلْ رِزْقَ اللَهِ، وَأَذْنِبْ مَاشِئْتَ!
وَالثَّانِي: اخْرُجْ مِنْ وِلَايَةِ اللَهِ؛ وَأَذْنِبْ مَاشِئْتَ!
وَالثَّالِثُ: اطْلُبْ مَوْضِعاً لَا يَرَاكَ اللَهُ، وَأَذْنِبْ مَا شِئْتَ!
وَالرَّابِعُ: إِذَا جَآءَ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ لِيَقْبِضَ رُوحَكَ فَادْفَعْهُ عَنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَأَذْنِبْ مَا شِئْتَ!
وَالْخَامِسُ: إِذَا أَدْخَلَكَ مَالِكٌ فِي النَّارِ فَلَا تَدْخُلْ فِي النَّارِ، وَأَذْنِبْ مَاشِئْتَ!

Do five things, then sin whatever you want!

First: Do not eat from God's provision, and sin whatever you want!

Second: Exit God's protection, and sin whatever you want!

Third: Find a place where God does not see you, and sin whatever you want!

Fourth: When the Angel of Death comes to you to seize your soul, fend him off yourself, and sin whatever you want!

Fifth: When the guardian angel of hell wants to enter you therein, do not enter, and sin whatever you want![11]

6. His Letter Concerning the Good of this World and the Hereafter

It is reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) that "My father narrated for me from his father, peace be upon them, that a man from Kūfah wrote to Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī, peace be upon them: 'O my master! Inform me of that which is the good of this world and the next.'

He [Imām Ḥusayn], peace be upon him, wrote for him:

أَنَّ رَجُلاً مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكُوفَةِ كَتَبَ إِلَى الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ: يَا سَيِّدِي! أَخْبِرْنِي بِخَيْرِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَه!

فَكَتَبَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلام: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مَنْ طَلَبَ رِضَا اللَّهِ بِسَخَطِ النَّاسِ كَفَاهُ اللَّهُ أُمُورَ النَّاسِ؛ وَمَنْ طَلَبَ رِضَا النَّاسِ بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ؛ وَالسَّلَامُ.

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. After that [i.e. after praising God and sending peace upon the Holy Prophet], whoever seeks God's satisfaction at the expense of people's dissatisfaction, God will suffice him the affairs of the people. And whoever seeks the people's satisfaction at the expense of God's dissatisfaction, God will leave him to the people. Peace."[12]

7. The Imām's Sayings and Advices about Knowledge, Experience, Honor, Contentment, Friendship, Planning, and the Oppressed

It is reported from the Imām (peace be upon him) that he said:

دِرَاسَةُ الْعِلْمِ لِقَاحُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ. وَطُولُ التَّجَارِبِ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْعَقْلِ. وَالشَّرَفُ التَّقْوَى. وَالْقُنُوعُ رَاحَةُ الْأَبْدَانِ. وَمَنْ أَحَبَّكَ نَهَاكَ؛ وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَكَ أَغْرَاكَ.

Education inseminates knowledge, and the intellect is enhanced by the accumulation of experience. Honor is to have self-restraint (*taqwá*), and contentment is the comfort of the body. Your friend is he who forbids you [against evil], and your enemy is he who persuades you [to do evil].[13]

And one of his advices was that:

إِيَّاكَ وَمَا تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ؛ فَإِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَا يُسِيءُ وَلَا يَعْتَذِرُ، وَالْمُنَافِقُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ يُسِيءُ وَيَعْتَذِرُ.

Beware of doing something from which you will apologize, because a believer is one who does not commit evil and [thus] does not apologize, but a hypocrite commits evil everyday and apologizes everyday.[14]

He advised his son, 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (peace be upon them), as follows:

اي بُنَيَّ! إِيَّاكَ وَظُلْمَ مَنْ لَا يَجِدُ عَلَيْكَ نَاصِراً إِلَّا اللّٰهَ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ.

My dear son! Beware of oppressing anyone who finds no helper against you save God, the Exalted and All-Mighty.[15]

8. The Imām's Sermon in Miná, where he Called the Companions to Promote Guardianship

Imām Ḥasan (peace be upon him) was poisoned and martyred in year 49 AH (669 CE) by Mu'āwiyah's order and through the Imām's wife, who was the daughter of Ash'ath ibn Qays.[16] After that, the difficulties and tribulations continued to grow, and the conditions became more adverse for the Shī'ites day by

day. The friends of God were fearful for their lives, and they were all accursed and driven away. On the contrary, the enemies of God would freely and manifestly boast for their misguidance and the innovations that they had made in Islam.

The Master of the Martyrs, Imām Ḥusayn (peace be upon him), performed the *ḥajj* (pilgrimage) one year prior to Mu'āwiyah's death [or two years according to some narrations]. He was accompanied by 'Abd-Allāh ibn Ja'far and 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Abbās. There the Imām gathered his household and all members of Banī Hāshim (the Prophet's clan) including men and women, and their affiliates (their slaves, adopted children, allies, and so on). He also gathered those of Anṣār (the "Supporters" of the Prophet in Medina) who knew him, and sent several envoys to call upon all companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) who were known for their righteousness, worship and asceticism. They were all gathered in the huge tent of the Imām in the land of Miná. There were about 200 companions of the Prophet and 700 men from the *tābi'īn* (the "Followers", who had not seen the Prophet but had seen the companions).

Thus the Imām stood up and delivered a sermon. He praised and glorified God, and said:

أَمَّا بَعْدُ؛ فَإِنَّ هَذَا الطَّاغِيَةَ قَدْ فَعَلَ بِنَا وَبِشِيعَتِنَا مَا قَدْ رَأَيْتُمْ وَعَلِمْتُمْ وَشَهِدْتُمْ! فَإِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ؛ فَإِنْ صَدَقْتُ فَصَدِّقُونِي، وَإِنْ كَذَبْتُ فَكَذِّبُونِي! وَأَسْأَلُكُمْ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَبِحَقِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) وَقَرَابَتِي مِنْ نَبِيِّكُمْ، لَمَّا سَيَّرْتُمْ مَقَامِي هَذَا وَوَصَفْتُمْ مَقَالَتِي، وَدَعَوْتُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ فِي أَمْصَارِكُمْ مِنْ قَبَآئِلِكُمْ مَنْ ءَامَنْتُمْ مِنَ النَّاسِ (وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ أُخْرَى بَعْدَ قَوْلِهِ فَكَذِّبُونِي: اسْمَعُوا مَقَالَتِي وَاكْتُبُوا قَوْلِي، ثُمَّ ارْجِعُوا إِلَى أَمْصَارِكُمْ وَقَبَآئِلِكُمْ؛ فَمَنْ ءَامَنْتُمْ مِنَ النَّاسِ) وَوَثِقْتُمْ بِهِ، فَادْعُوهُمْ إِلَى مَا تَعْلَمُونَ مِنْ حَقِّنَا؛ فَإِنِّي أَتَخَوَّفُ أَنْ يَدْرُسَ هَذَا الْأَمْرُ وَيَذْهَبَ الْحَقُّ وَيُغْلَبَ؛ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ.

After that, you have seen, witnessed, and come to know what this transgressor [i.e. Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān] has done to us and to our followers. Now I want to ask you something; confirm what I say if it is true, and deny it if it is a lie. I adjure you by God's right on you, by the right of God's Messenger [peace be upon him and his family], and by my kinship with your Prophet, that all of you report my speech in your cities, and convey my position to your tribes and to anyone that you find trustworthy and reliable.[17] Call them to the right that you recognize for us; for indeed I fear lest this matter fades out, and the truth is overpowered and put aside. "But God completes His light, though the disbelievers are averse."[18]

Then there was no part of the Qur'ān about them [the Household of the Prophet] but that the Imām recited and explained. He also narrated everything that the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, had said about his father [ʿAlī, the father of Ḥusayn], his mother, his brother, and himself. The companions responded to each point that he told them by saying, "O God, that is true! We have heard and witnessed it." And the Followers would say, "O God, so-and-so of the companions—whom I trust and confide—narrated this for me." Then the Imām said, "I adjure you by God that you narrate these for those whom you trust and approve of their religion."

Among the things that Ḥusayn reminded them and on which he took a vow from them was:

أُنْشِدُكُمُ اللهَ إِلَّا حَدَّثْتُمْ بِهِ مَنْ تَثِقُونَ بِهِ وَبِدِينِهِ!
أُنْشِدُكُمُ اللهَ! أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ كَانَ أَخَا رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ وَسَلَّمَ حِينَ ءَاخَى بَيْنَ أَصْحَابِهِ فَآخَى بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ نَفْسِهِ وَقَالَ: أَنْتَ أَخِي وَأَنَا أَخُوكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَة؟

I adjure you by God, do you know that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib was the brother of the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family? That when he [the Prophet] established brotherhood amongst his companions, he set ʿAlī and him-

self as brothers, and told him, "You are my brother and I am your brother, in this world and in Hereafter"?[19]

They said, "O God, that is true!" The Imām said,

قَالَ: أُنْشِدُكُمُ اللهَ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَصَبَهُ يَوْمَ غَدِيرِ خُمٍّ فَنَادَى لَهُ بِالْوِلَايَةِ، وَقَالَ: لِيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ؟!

I adjure you by God, do you know that the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, raised him [ʿAlī] on the day of Ghadīr Khumm, proclaimed his guardianship, and said, "Those who are present should convey it to the absent"?

They said, "O God, that is true!" The Imām said,

قَالَ: أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ فِي ءَاخِرِ خُطْبَةٍ خَطَبَهَا: إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَأَهْلَ بَيْتِي، فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا؟!

Do you know that in the last sermon that he delivered, the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, said, "Truly I have left among you two precious things: the Book of God and my Household; cling unto them so that you may never go astray"?[20]

ثُمَّ نَاشَدَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ سَمِعُوهُ يَقُولُ: مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُ يُحِبُّنِي وَيُبْغِضُ عَلِيّاً فَقَدْ كَذَبَ؛ لَيْسَ يُحِبُّنِي وَيُبْغِضُ عَلِيّاً. فَقَالَ لَهُ قَائِلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! وَكَيْفَ ذَلِكَ؟
قَالَ: لِأَنَّهُ مِنِّي وَأَنَا مِنْهُ؛ مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ فَقَدْ أَحَبَّنِي، وَمَنْ أَحَبَّنِي فَقَدْ أَحَبَّ اللهَ؛
وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَهُ فَقَدْ أَبْغَضَنِي، وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَنِي فَقَدْ أَبْغَضَ اللهَ؟!
فَقَالُوا: اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ! قَدْ سَمِعْنَا. وَتَفَرَّقُوا عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

They said, "O God, that is true!" The Imām continued with several other arguments, and concluded by adjuring them that

they heard the Prophet say, "One who thinks that he likes me is a liar if he dislikes 'Alī," whereby someone asked, "How can it be, O Messenger of God?" He replied, "That is because he is of me, and I am of him. One who likes him likes me, and one who likes me likes God. One who dislikes him dislikes me, and one who dislikes me dislikes God."[21] The companions [again] replied, "O God, that is true. We heard it," and they dispersed, carrying the pledge of the Imām.[22]

9. His Sermon in Holy Mecca, when he was Leaving for Karbalā'

It is narrated that the Imām (peace be upon him) delivered a sermon when he was about to leave for Iraq:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، مَاشَآءَ اللَّهُ، وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ. خُطَّ الْمَوْتُ عَلَى وُلْدِ ءَادَمَ مَخَطَّ الْقِلَادَةِ عَلَى جِيدِ الْفَتَاةِ. وَمَا أَوْلَهَنِي إِلَى أَسْلَافِي اشْتِيَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ إِلَى يُوسُفَ. وَخُيِّرَ لِي مَصْرَعٌ أَنَا لَاقِيهِ؛ كَأَنِّي بِأَوْصَالِي تَتَقَطَّعُهَا عُسْلَانُ الْفَلَوَاتِ بَيْنَ النَّوَاوِيسِ وَكَرْبَلَاءَ؛ فَيَمْلَأَنَّ مِنِّي أَكْرَاشاً جُوفاً، وَأَجْرِبَةً سُغْباً. لَا مَحِيصَ عَنْ يَوْمٍ خُطَّ بِالْقَلَمِ. رِضَا اللَّهِ رِضَانَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ؛ نَصْبِرُ عَلَى بَلَائِهِ، وَيُوَفِّينَا أُجُورَ الصَّابِرِينَ. لَنْ تَشُذَّ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ) لُحْمَتُهُ، وَهِيَ مَجْمُوعَةٌ لَهُ فِي حَظِيرَةِ الْقُدْسِ، تَقَرُّ بِهِمْ عَيْنُهُ، وَيُنْجَزُ لَهُمْ وَعْدُهُ. مَنْ كَانَ فِينَا بَاذِلاً مُهْجَتَهُ، وَمُوَطِّناً عَلَى لِقَآءِ اللَّهِ نَفْسَهُ، فَلْيَرْحَلْ مَعَنَا؛ فَإِنَّنِي رَاحِلٌ مُصْبِحاً إِنْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى.

All praise is to God; whatever God wants; there is no power save by God; and may God send mercy upon his Messenger.

Death is tied to the children of Adam as a necklace is tied around the neck of a girl; and so much do I yearn to join my forerunners, like the yearning of Jacob for Joseph. A place of falling down has been chosen for me, and I shall come to it.

It is as if I see myself torn into pieces by the wolves of the deserts between Nawāwīs and Karbalā'. They shall fill up their hungry stomachs and their empty vessels with me.

There is no escape from a day that has been written by the Pen [of God's Decree]. The satisfaction of God is the satisfaction of us Ahl al-Bayt [Household of the Prophet]. We shall have patience in His trials, and He will reward us in full the reward of those who are patient.

There will never be any separation between the Messenger of God [peace be upon him and his family] and his parts [i.e. his kin]; rather they will all gather around him in the Sacred Paradise. They will be a source of delight for him, and what he had been promised will be realized through them.

Whoever is willing to give his blood in our cause, and has prepared his soul to meet with God, should depart with us. Indeed I will set off in the morning, if the Supreme God wills.[23]

10. The Imām's Poems in Response to Farazdaq when he was Departing for Kūfah

When the Imām was departing for Kūfah, he came across Farazdaq ibn Ghālib, who was a prominent poet at the time. Farazdaq asked him, "O, son of God's Messenger, how can you trust the people of Kūfah when they are the same people who killed your cousin, Muslim ibn 'Aqīl, and his companions?" The Imām prayed for Muslim and said,

> Muslim attained God's mercy and satisfaction. He did what was incumbent upon him, and now we must do what is incumbent upon us.

Then the Imām recited the following lines:

وَإنْ تَكُنِ الدُّنْيَا تُعَدُّ نَفِيسَةً — فَدَارُ ثَوَابِ اللَّهِ أَعْلَى وَأَنْبَلُ

وَإنْ تَكُنِ الْأَبْدَانُ لِلْمَوْتِ أُنْشِئَتْ — فَقَتْلُ امْرِئٍ بِالسَّيْفِ فِي اللَّهِ أَفْضَلُ

وَإِنْ تَكُنِ الْأَرْزَاقُ قِسْماً مُقَدَّراً فَقِلَّةُ حِرْصِ الْمَرْءِ فِي الْكَسْبِ أَجْمَلُ
وَإِنْ تَكُنِ الأَمْوَالُ لِلتَّرْكِ جَمْعُهَا فَمَا بَالُ مَتْرُوكٍ بِهِ الْمَرْءُ يَبْخَلُ

Even if this world is a precious place,
God's reward is higher in grace.

If the body of men are to die some day,
It's better to be killed in God's way.

Provisions are fixed and allotted in advance,
So curtail your greed in seeking to enhance.

If one and his wealth are to be pulled apart,
Why be a miser for things that depart?[24]

It has also been narrated that the Imām recited these lines on the day of 'Āshūrā' as he fought.[25]

11. Rebuking the People of this World

It is narrated by Farazdaq that when I was returning from Kūfah I saw Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, in the way. He asked me, "What was going on there, O, Abū Firās [Farazdaq's sobriquet]?"

I said, "Do you want me to tell you the truth?"

He replied, "Yes, I want the truth."

I said, "Their hearts [of the people of Kūfah] are with you, but their swords are with the Umayyads; and God is the only source of support."

The Imām said,

قَالَ: مَا وَرَاكَ يَا أَبَا فِرَاسٍ؟!
قُلْتُ: أَصْدُقُكَ؟! قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الصِّدْقَ أُرِيدُ!
قُلْتُ: أَمَّا الْقُلُوبُ فَمَعَكَ، وَأَمَّا السُّيُوفُ فَمَعَ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ؛ وَالنَّصْرُ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللهِ.
قَالَ: مَا أَرَاكَ إِلَّا صَدَقْتَ! النَّاسُ عَبِيدُ الْمَالِ وَالدِّينُ لَغْوٌ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ،
يَحُوطُونَهُ مَا دَرَّتْ بِهِ مَعَايِشُهُمْ؛ فَإِذَا مُحِّصُوا بِالْبَلَاءِ قَلَّ الدَّيَّانُونَ.

I deem that you told the truth. People are the slaves of wealth, and the religion is vainly on their tongues. They maintain it so long as they have productive livelihoods. But when they are tested by a trial, the religious are few.[26]

12. The Imām's Sermon when Ḥurr Blocked his Way

When Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Riyāḥī sternly blocked the way of the Imām to Kūfah, neither allowing him to advance to Kūfah nor letting him return to Medina, the Imām delivered a sermon in a place called Dhī-Ḥasam. He praised and glorified God, and said,

أَمَّا بَعْدُ؛ إِنَّهُ قَدْ نَزَلَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مَا قَدْ تَرَوْنَ. وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ تَغَيَّرَتْ وَتَنَكَّرَتْ وَأَدْبَرَ مَعْرُوفُهَا وَاسْتَمَرَّتْ حَذَّاءَ، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا صُبَابَةٌ كَصُبَابَةِ الْإِنَاءِ، وَخَسِيسُ عَيْشٍ كَالْمَرْعَى الْوَبِيلِ. أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنَّ الْحَقَّ لَا يُعْمَلُ بِهِ، وَأَنَّ الْبَاطِلَ لَا يُتَنَاهَى عَنْهُ؟! لِيَرْغَبَ الْمُؤْمِنُ فِي لِقَآءِ اللّٰهِ مُحِقّاً؛ فَإِنِّي لَا أَرَى الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا سَعَادَةً، وَلَا الْحَيٰوةَ مَعَ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا بَرَماً.

After that, you can see how things have turned out to be. This world has changed and become unpleasant. Its good has turned back, and it is passing very fast. Nothing has remained of it except a dreg, like what remains in the bottom of a vessel, or an unworthy living as on a barren eroded land.

Do you see not that the truth is not acted upon, and falsehood is not forbidden? [Thus,] a believer should truly aspire to meet God, for indeed I see naught death but felicity, and life with the oppressors but encumbrance.[27]

The following is also reported as an addition to his sermon:

إِنَّ النَّاسَ عَبِيدُ الدُّنْيَا، وَالدِّينُ لَعْقٌ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، يَحُوطُونَهُ مَا دَرَّتْ مَعَايِشُهُمْ؛ فَإِذَا مُحِّصُوا بِالْبَلَاءِ قَلَّ الدَّيَّانُونَ.

People are the slaves of this world, and the religion is like spittle on their tongues. They maintain it so long as they have productive livelihoods. But when they are tested by a trial, the religious are few.[28]

At that time, Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn, Nāfi‘ ibn Hilāl, and Burayr ibn Khuḍayr stood up and re-emphasized their allegiance and commitment to the Imām.

13. The Imām's Answer to Ḥurr about his Preparedness for Martyrdom

Ḥurr ibn Yazīd followed the Imām in his course, and told him, "O Ḥusayn, I remind you of God concerning yourself, for I attest that if you fight you will certainly be killed." The Imām replied,

أ فَبِالْمَوْتِ تُخَوِّفُنِي؟! وَهَلْ يَعْدُو بِكُمُ الْخَطْبُ إِنْ تَقْتُلُونِي؟! وَسَأَقُولُ كَمَا قَالَ أَخُو الْأَوْسِ لِابْنِ عَمِّهِ وَهُوَ يُرِيدُ نُصْرَةَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ؛ فَخَوَّفَهُ ابْنُ عَمِّهِ وَقَالَ: أَيْنَ تَذْهَبُ؟ فَإنَّكَ مَقْتُولٌ. فَقَالَ:

سَأَمْضِي وَمَا بِالْمَوْتِ عَارٌ عَلَى الْفَتَى   إِذَا مَا نَوَى حَقّاً وَجَاهَدَ مُسْلِماً
وَوَاسَى الرِّجَالَ الصَّالِحِينَ بِنَفْسِهِ   وَفَارَقَ مَثْبُوراً وَخَالَفَ مُجْرِماً
فَإِنْ عِشْتُ لَمْ أَنْدَمْ وَإِنْ مِتُّ لَمْ أُلَمْ   كَفَى بِكَ ذُلّاً أَنْ تَعِيشَ وَتُرْغَمَ

Do you scare me of death? And will you be exempted from its aftermath if you kill me?

I shall say what one of the believers from Aws said to his cousin when he wanted to support the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family. His cousin warned him and said, "Where are you going? You will surely be killed!" He replied,

"I shall go, and noble souls have no shame of demise,
If they go for the truth and with submission they rise;

If they desert the wretched, and oppose the sinners,

If they go side-by-side with the righteous and the wise.

No regret if I live, and no blame if I die,
It's enough dishonor to be oppressed, otherwise."[29]

It might have been in that occasion that the Imām said the following:

لَيسَ شَأني شَأنَ مَنْ يَخافُ الْمَوْتَ. مَا أَهْوَنَ الْمَوْتَ عَلَى سَبِيلِ نَيْلِ الْعِزِّ وَإِحْيَاءِ الْحَقِّ. لَيْسَ الْمَوْتُ فِي سَبِيلِ الْعِزِّ إِلَّا حَيوةً خَالِدَةً؛ وَلَيْسَتِ الْحَيوةُ مَعَ الذُّلِّ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي لَا حَيوةَ مَعَهُ. أَ فَبِالْمَوْتِ تُخَوِّفُنِي؟! هَيْهَاتَ؛ طَاشَ سَهْمُكَ، وَخَابَ ظَنُّكَ! لَسْتُ أَخَافُ الْمَوْتَ. إِنَّ نَفْسِي لَأَكْبَرُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، وَهِمَّتِي لَأَعْلَى مِنْ أَنْ أَحْمِلَ الضَّيْمَ خَوْفاً مِنَ الْموتِ؛ وَهَلْ تَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى أَكْثَرَ مِنْ قَتْلِي؟! مَرْحَباً بِالْقَتْلِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ! وَلَكِنَّكُمْ لَا تَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى هَدْمِ مَجْدِي وَمَحْوِ عِزَّتِي وَشَرَفِي؛ فَإذاً لَا أُبَالِي مِنَ الْقَتْلِ.

I am not such a person who fears death. So easy is death in the way of reaching honor and reviving the truth. Dying in the way of honor is naught but eternal life, and living with dishonor is a death with which there is no life.

Now, do you scare me of death? Never! Your arrow missed the target, and your conjecture failed!

I am not scared of dying. My soul is greater than that, and my determination is more exalted than making me bear oppression in fear of death. Can you do anything more than killing me? So bravo to death in the way of God! Even if you kill me, you cannot obliterate my glory or efface my honor and nobility, and thus I cannot care any less about being killed.[30]

Imām Ḥusayn was the same person who said,

مَوْتٌ فِي عِزٍّ خَيْرٌ مِنْ حَيوةٍ فِي ذُلٍّ.

Dying with honor and dominance is better than living with dishonor and subordination.[31]

And during the battle, a part of his war cry as he attacked the enemy was:

الْمَوْتُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رُكُوبِ الْعَارِ وَالْعَارُ أَوْلَى مِنْ دُخُولِ النَّارِ

Death is better than dishonor to acquire;
But dishonor is preferred over the fire.[32]

14. His Sermon in Bīḍah about the Reason for his Rise, and the Description of himself and the People of Kūfah

He delivered a sermon in a place called Bīḍah for his companions and the companions of Ḥurr. After praising and glorifying God he said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ قَالَ: مَنْ رَأَى سُلْطَاناً جَآئِراً مُسْتَحِلّاً لِحُرُمِ اللَّهِ، نَاكِثاً لِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ، مُخَالِفاً لِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ)؛ يَعْمَلُ فِي عِبَادِ اللَّهِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ؛ فَلَمْ يُغَيِّرْ [يُغَيِّرْ] عَلَيْهِ بِفِعْلٍ وَلَا قَوْلٍ، كَانَ حَقّاً عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ مَدْخَلَهُ.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ هَؤُلَآءِ قَدْ لَزِمُوا طَاعَةَ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَتَرَكُوا طَاعَةَ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَأَظْهَرُوا الْفَسَادَ، وَعَطَّلُوا الْحُدُودَ؛ وَاسْتَأْثَرُوا بِالْفَيْءِ؛ وَأَحَلُّوا حَرَامَ اللَّهِ، وَحَرَّمُوا حَلَالَهُ؛ وَأَنَا أَحَقُّ مَنْ غَيَّرَ [مِنْ غَيْرِي]. وَقَدْ أَتَتْنِي كُتُبُكُمْ، وَقَدِمَتْ عَلَيَّ رُسُلُكُمْ بِبَيْعَتِكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ لَا تُسَلِّمُونِي وَلَا تَخْذُلُونِي؛ فَإِنْ تَمَمْتُمْ عَلَى بَيْعَتِكُمْ تُصِيبُوا رُشْدَكُمْ.

فَأَنَا الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ، وَابْنُ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَءَالِهِ؛ نَفْسِي مَعَ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَأَهْلِي مَعَ أَهْلِيكُمْ؛ فَلَكُمْ فِيَّ أُسْوَةٌ. وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَنَقَضْتُمْ عَهْدَكُمْ، وَخَلَعْتُمْ بَيْعَتِي مِنْ أَعْنَاقِكُمْ، فَلَعَمْرِي مَا هِيَ لَكُمْ بِنُكْرٍ؛ لَقَدْ فَعَلْتُمُوهَا بِأَبِي وَأَخِي وَابْنِ عَمِّي مُسْلِمٍ. فَالْمَغْرُورُ مَنِ اغْتَرَّ بِكُمْ. فَحَظَّكُمْ

أَخطَأتُمْ، وَنَصِيبَكُمْ ضَيَّعْتُمْ؛ وَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ. وَسَيُغْنِي اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ. وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ.

O, people! Indeed the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, said, "Whoever sees an unjust ruler who legitimizes what God has forbidden, breaks His covenant, opposes the Tradition of His Messenger [peace be upon him and his family], and acts amongst the servants of God based on sin and oppression, then if that person [who sees all these] does not oppose [or condemn] him neither by action nor by words, it is incumbent on God to enter that person in the same place as that ruler."

Lo! These people [the unjust Umayyad rulers] have surely abandoned obeying the All-Merciful, and have adopted the obedience of Satan. They have openly established corruption, have forsaken God's limits, and have taken the spoils exclusively in their possession. They have legalized what God has made unlawful, and have illegalized what He has made lawful. And I am the most suited person to make a change [or I am more deserving than others].

I received your letters, and your emissaries presented me your pledge of allegiance that you will not surrender me [to the enemy] and will not leave me alone. Now if you stand by your pledge you will achieve your rectitude.

And here I am, Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī, son of Fāṭimah—the daughter of God's Messenger, peace be upon him and his family. I am amongst you, and my family is amongst your families [i.e. I have not privileged myself over you in terms of wealth or power]. Therefore I am an exemplar for you to follow [i.e. as an Imām. You should follow me in not having an extravagant lifestyle, not plundering the spoils, and abstaining from wastefulness and prodigality].

But if you fail to do so, break your covenant, and take off your pledge of allegiance from your necks, then by my life that would not be surprising from you. That is what you did with my father, my brother, and my cousin Muslim [ibn

'Aqīl]. Thus, a deceived person is one who falls for you [and trusts you].

You have missed your gain and lost on your share. Whosoever breaks his oath breaks it but to his own hurt, and God will soon relieve me from you. May God's mercy, bounty and peace be upon you.[33]

When the Imām (peace be upon him) arrived in Karbalā', he called for a paper and an inkwell and wrote a letter similar to the above sermon. He stamped the bottom of the letter with his signet and sent it to Kūfah by Qays ibn Mushar al-Ṣaydāwī for the prominent figures of the city and those who were thought to be on the path of the Imām.[34]

15. The Imām's Sermon for his Companions on the night of 'Āshūrā', and Excusing them from their Pledge of Allegiance

The Imām gathered his companions around sunset on the day of Tāsū'ā (9 Muḥarram 61 AH/8 October 680 CE). The fourth Imām, 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (peace be upon him), narrated that "I was ill at the time, but I went close to hear what my father wanted to tell his companions. He said:

أُثْنِي عَلَى اللهِ أَحْسَنَ الثَّنَآءِ. وَأَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى السَّرَّآءِ والضَّرَّآءِ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَحْمَدُكَ عَلَى أَنْ أَكْرَمْتَنَا بِالنُّبُوَّةِ، وَعَلَّمْتَنَا الْقُرْءَانَ، وَفَقَّهْتَنَا فِي الدِّينِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي لَا أَعْلَمُ أَصْحَاباً أَوْفَى وَلَا خَيْراً مِنْ أَصْحَابِي، وَلَا أَهْلَ بَيْتٍ أَبَرَّ وَلَا أَوْصَلَ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي؛ فَجَزَاكُمُ اللهُ عَنِّي خَيْرَ الْجَزَآءِ.

أَلَا وَإِنِّي قَدْ أَذِنْتُ لَكُمْ، فَانْطَلِقُوا جَمِيعاً فِي حِلٍّ؛ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنِّي ذِمَامٌ. هَذَا اللَّيْلُ قَدْ غَشِيَكُمْ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ جَمَلاً.

I extol God by the best extolments, and I praise him on ease and difficulty. O God, I praise Thee, for Thou hast honored us by prophethood, taught us the Qur'ān, and given us insight in religion.

After that, truly I do not know any group of companions that are more loyal and better than my companions,

and no household that is more benevolent and affectionate than my household. May God reward you the best of rewards on my behalf.

Lo! All of you shall go, as there is no obligation upon you. I have indeed excused you, and hold no claim or pledge of allegiance against you. This is the night that has covered you, so mount on it and ride it as a camel.

There, the Imām's brothers, sons and nephews, the sons of 'Abd-Allāh ibn Ja'far, and many of his companions such as Muslim ibn 'Awsajah and Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn stood up and one by one expressed their loyalty and commitment apologetically. They said, 'Why should we do so? Why should we ever live after you? May God never make that happen,' and 'We wish we had many lives so that we could sacrifice them all for you.'"[35]

16. His Supplication in the Morning of 'Āshūrā'

It is narrated by the fourth Imām that when the morning unfolded for the army of Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, he raised his hands in supplication (*du'ā'*) to God and said,

اللَهُمَّ أنْتَ ثِقَتِي فِي كُلِّ كَرْبٍ، وَأنْتَ رَجَائِي فِي كُلِّ شِدَّةٍ، وَأنْتَ لِي فِي كُلِّ أمْرٍ نَزَلَ بِي ثِقَةٌ وَعُدَّةٌ. كَمْ مِنْ هَمٍّ يَضْعُفُ فِيهِ الْفُؤَادُ، وَتَقِلُّ فِيهِ الْحِيلَةُ، وَيَخْذُلُ فِيهِ الصَّدِيقُ، وَيَشْمُتُ فِيهِ الْعَدُوُّ؛ أنْزَلْتُهُ بِكَ، وَشَكَوْتُهُ إلَيْكَ، رَغْبَةً مِنِّي إلَيْكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ؛ فَفَرَّجْتَهُ عَنِّي، وَكَشَفْتَهُ، وَكَفَيْتَهُ. فَأنْتَ وَلِيُّ كُلِّ نِعْمَةٍ، وَصَاحِبُ كُلِّ حَسَنَةٍ، وَمُنْتَهَى كُلِّ رَغْبَةٍ.

O God, Thou art my Trustee in every sorrow; Thou art my hope in every difficulty; and Thou art my source of reliance and reserve in every hardship.

So many times I have had problems in which one's heart is tired out, his ability falls short, his friends leave him alone, and his enemies taunt him. I brought it up to Thee and complained to Thee about it, being inclined to-

ward Thee and averse to others. Thus Thou covered for me, resolved my problem, and took it off from me.

Therefore Thou art [O, my Lord,] the guardian of every bounty, the owner of every good, and the ultimate end of every desire.[36]

17. The Imām's Sermon in the Morning of 'Āshūrā' and his Last Word to the People of Kūfah

Then the Imām called for his horse, mounted it, and delivered the following sermon with a loud voice such that everyone could hear him:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! اسْمَعُوا قَوْلِي، وَلَا تَعْجَلُوا حَتَّى أَعِظَكُمْ بِمَا يَحِقُّ عَلَيَّ لَكُمْ؛ وَحَتَّى أُعْذِرَ إِلَيْكُمْ! فَإِنْ أَعْطَيْتُمُونِي النَّصْفَ كُنْتُمْ بِذَلِكَ أَسْعَدَ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ عَلَيَّ سَبِيلٌ! وَإِنْ لَمْ تُعْطُونِي النَّصْفَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَأَجْمِعُوا رَأْيَكُمْ وَشُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ! إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ.

O, people! Listen to me, and do not rush until I admonish you by what is my responsibility toward you, and so that I may justify my movement. Then if you accept my reasoning, confirm what I say and judge fairly, it will be the cause of your felicity and you will have no grounds [to fight] against me. And if you choose not to do justice to me, then gather your thoughts and your partners, "then let not your affair be a worry to you, then finish my case and respite me not;" "Indeed my Guardian is God Who hath revealed the Book, and He is the Guardian of the righteous."[37]

Thus, he started by praising and glorifying God, and sending peace upon the Prophet. No one was ever seen—whether before or after him—deliver a sermon with such eloquence. He said:

First of all, remember my lineage and see who I am. Then return to your selves with blame and see for yourself: is it permissible for you to kill me and break my sanctity? Am I not the son of the daughter of your Prophet? Am I not the son of the Prophet's cousin, who was the first to believe in God and confirm what His Messenger brought from his Lord? Is it not true that Ḥamzah—the Master of the Martyrs—is my father's uncle? Is it not that Ja'far—who flies in paradise with his two wings—is my uncle? Has it not reached you that the Messenger of God called me and my brother "the two masters of the youths of paradise"?[38]

If you confirm what I said, for it is the truth, and by God I have never lied since I have known that God hates the liars [then you would refrain from killing me]. And if you deny me, then there are those amongst you who will inform you if you ask them. Ask Jābir ibn 'Abd-Allāh al-Anṣārī, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Sahl ibn Sa'd al-Sā'idī, Zayd ibn Arqam, or Anas ibn Mālik. They have truly heard that from the Messenger of God about me and my brother. Is that not enough to keep you away from shedding my blood?

There Shimr[39] said, "One who understands what he says 'worships God only on a margin'[40] [or he (i.e. Ḥusayn) worships God only on a margin, only if he knew what he is saying]." Ḥabīb ibn Maẓāhir answered him, "By God, I see that you worship God on seventy margins [of doubt and misguidance]. And I attest that you are right: you do not understand what he says. God has indeed sealed your heart." Then Imām Ḥusayn continued,

If you have any doubt in that, do you also have any doubt in that I am the son of the daughter of your Prophet? By God, there is no son of a Prophet's daughter in the east or west of the universe except for me, neither amongst you nor amongst others.

Woe on you, have you come at me for the ransom of someone whom I have killed from you, or some of your wealth that I have spoiled, or a wound that I have caused?

None of them replied. So he called,

O, Shabath ibn Rib'ī! O, Ḥajjār ibn Abjur! O, Qays ibn al-Ash'ath! O, Yazīd ibn al-Ḥārith! Did you not write to me that "Come! for indeed the fruits have ripened, the meadows have greened, and you will enter while there is an army prepared for you"?

Qays ibn al-Ash'ath said to him, "We do not know what you are talking about. But you should settle for the command of your cousin [i.e. Yazīd], for indeed you will not see from them except that which you like." The Imām replied,

لَا وَاللّٰهِ! لَا أُعْطِيكُمْ بِيَدِي إِعْطَآءَ الذَّلِيلِ، وَلَا أُقِرُّ لَكُمْ قَرَارَ الْعَبِيدِ.

By God no! I will not give in to you with dishonor, and I will not carry a load for you like a slave.[41]

Then he called out,

يَا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ! إِنِّي عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ أَن تَرْجُمُونِ؛ وَأَعُوذُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ.

O, servants of God! "I have truly sought refuge in my Lord and your Lord, lest you stone me [to death];" "I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every person who is an arrogant and believeth not in the Day of Reckoning."[42]

18. His Sermon on the Day of 'Āshūrā' about his Aversion toward Dishonor, and his Criticism and Accursing of the People of Kūfah

It is narrated that on the day of 'Āshūrā', the army of 'Umar ibn Sa'd, may God deprive them from His mercy,[43] mounted their horses [in preparation to fight the Imām]. At that point Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, sent Burayr ibn Khuḍayr toward

them. Burayr admonished them but they did not heed, and reminded them but they did not benefit.

Thus Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, mounted his camel—or his horse according to some narrations—and asked them to be silent and listen up. They quieted down. The Imām praised and extolled God, glorified Him the way He deserves, sent blessings upon Muḥammad, the angels, the messengers and the prophets, and reached the highest frontiers of speech. Then he said:

تَبّاً لَكُمْ أَيَّتُهَا الْجَمَاعَةُ وَتَرَحاً! حِينَ اسْتَصْرَخْتُمُونَا وَالِهِينَ، فَأَصْرَخْنَاكُمْ مُوجِفِينَ، سَلَلْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا سَيْفاً لَنَا فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ! وَحَشَشْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا نَاراً اقْتَدَحْنَاهَا عَلَى عَدُوِّنَا وَعَدُوِّكُمْ! فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ إِلْباً لِأَعْدَائِكُمْ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِكُمْ بِغَيْرِ عَدْلٍ أَفْشَوْهُ فِيكُمْ، وَلَا أَمَلٍ أَصْبَحَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ! فَهَلَّا ـ لَكُمُ الْوَيْلَاتُ ـ تَرَكْتُمُونَا؛ وَالسَّيْفُ مَشِيمٌ، وَالْجَأْشُ طَامِنٌ، وَالرَّأْيُ لَمَّا يُسْتَحْصَفْ!؟ وَلَكِنْ أَسْرَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهَا كَطَيْرَةِ الدَّبَى! وَتَدَاعَيْتُمْ إِلَيْهَا كَتَهَافُتِ الْفَرَاشِ! فَسُحْقاً لَكُمْ يَا عَبِيدَ الْأُمَّةِ! وَشُذَّاذَ الْأَحْزَابِ! وَنَبَذَةَ الْكِتَابِ! وَمُحَرِّفِي الْكَلِمِ! وَعُصْبَةَ الْآثَامِ! وَنَفَثَةَ الشَّيْطَانِ! وَمُطْفِئِي السُّنَنِ! أَهَؤُلَاءِ تَعْضُدُونَ؟! وَعَنَّا تَتَخَاذَلُونَ؟! أَجَلْ وَاللَّهِ غَدْرٌ فِيكُمْ قَدِيمٌ! وَشَجَتْ إِلَيْهِ أُصُولُكُمْ! وَتَأَزَّرَتْ عَلَيْهِ فُرُوعُكُمْ! فَكُنْتُمْ أَخْبَثَ ثَمَرٍ شَجاً لِلنَّاظِرِ! وَأُكْلَةً لِلْغَاصِبِ!

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدَّعِيَّ ابْنَ الدَّعِيِّ قَدْ رَكَزَ بَيْنَ اثْنَتَيْنِ:

بَيْنَ السِّلَّةِ وَالذِّلَّةِ؛ وَهَيْهَاتَ مِنَّا الذِّلَّةُ. يَأْبَى اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ لَنَا وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ، وَحُجُورٌ طَابَتْ وَطَهُرَتْ، وَأُنُوفٌ حَمِيَّةٌ، وَنُفُوسٌ أَبِيَّةٌ؛ مِنْ أَنْ نُؤْثِرَ طَاعَةَ اللِّئَامِ عَلَى مَصَارِعِ الْكِرَامِ. أَلَا وَإِنِّي زَاحِفٌ بِهَذِهِ الْأُسْرَةِ مَعَ قِلَّةِ الْعَدَدِ، وَخَذْلَةِ النَّاصِرِ.

May you be ruined, O people, and grieve! For you eagerly cried unto us for help, and we quickly came to help you. But then you pulled out our own swords that we had in your trust against us, and inflamed against us a fire that we had ignited against our enemy and yours.

So you came to support your enemies against your friends, while they [those enemies] had spread no justice amongst you and you had no hopes to achieve through them.

Many woes be upon you! Why did you not desert us when the swords were sheathed, the hearts were calm, and the minds were not yet settled [to fight]? Instead, you rushed to it [the fire of killing and misguidance] as grass-hoppers would fly, and called forth each other around it like the crowding of butterflies.

So be far [from God's mercy], you slaves of this nation, and rabble of the tribes! You have deserted the Book, distorted the words [of God], and put out the traditions [of the Prophet]. You are the party of sinners, and the breath of Satan. Do you support these people and leave us alone?!

Yes, by God. You have a history of betrayal, on which you are rooted, and from which you have branched out and flourished. You are the most corrupt fruit that blocks the throat of its owner [who observes it] like a bone, while it is a tasty bite for the thief.

Lo! This illegitimate son of the illegitimate [i.e. 'Ubayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād] has confined me between one of two things: either sword or dishonor. But far from us is dishonor. That is never approved for us by God, His Messenger, the believers, the pure and immaculate laps [that brought us up], the fervent people of nobility, and the invincible souls. They would never approve that we choose submission to the ignoble over the falling of the noble.

Know that I will truly proceed with this group [that is with me] even though we are few in number and the supporters have left us alone.

Then he continued by reciting these lines by Farwah ibn Musayk al-Murādī:

فَإنْ نَهْزِمْ فَهَزَّامُونَ قِدْماً وَإنْ نُغْلَبْ فَغَيْرُ مُغَلَّبِينَا

وَمَا إنْ طِبُّنَا جُبْنٌ وَلكِنْ مَنَايَانَا وَدَوْلَةُ ءَاخَرِينَا

إِذَا مَا الْمَوْتُ رَفَّعَ عَنْ أُنَاسٍ كَلَاكِلَهُ، أَنَاخَ بِآخَرِينَا
فَأَفْنَى ذَلِكُمْ سَرَوَاةَ قَوْمِي كَمَا أَفْنَى الْقُرُونَ الْأَوَّلِينَا
فَلَوْ خَلَدَ الْمُلُوكُ إِذاً خَلَدْنَا وَلَوْ بَقِيَ الْكِرَامُ إِذاً بَقِينَا
فَقُلْ لِلشَّامِتِينَ بِنَا أَفِيقُوا سَيَلْقَى الشَّامِتُونَ كَمَا لَقِينَا

If we defeat them we have long been victorious,
And if we are defeated we are never notorious.

Fear of death is not our trait; rather,
In our death there's power for others.

If a group of people are spared by death,
It catches others with their final breath.[44]

The stars of my tribe were wiped out before
By death, as it did with the tribes of the yore.

If the kings could resist, so would we resist,
If the noble would persist, so would we persist.

Those who taunt us, tell them to awake!
What happened to us, they shall also take.

Then he continued his sermon,

ثُمَّ أَيْمُ اللَّهِ! لَا تَلْبَثُونَ بَعْدَهَا إِلَّا كَرَيْثَمَا يُرْكَبُ الْفَرَسُ، حَتَّى تَدُورَ بِكُمْ دَوْرَ الرَّحَى! وَتَقْلَقَ بِكُمْ قَلَقَ الْمِحْوَرِ! عَهْدٌ عَهِدَهُ إِلَيَّ أَبِي عَنْ جَدِّي؛ فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ! إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُم مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآ إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ.

اللَّهُمَّ احْبِسْ عَنْهُمْ قَطْرَ السَّمَآءِ! وَابْعَثْ عَلَيْهِمْ سِنِينَ كَسِنِي يُوسُفَ! وَسَلِّطْ عَلَيْهِمْ غُلَامَ ثَقِيفٍ، فَيَسُومَهُمْ كَأْساً مُصَبَّرَةً! فَإِنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُونَا وَخَذَلُونَا وَأَنْتَ رَبُّنَا! عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا، وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا، وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ!

By God, you will not remain after this [battle, and will not ride your wishes] but for as much time as one is

mounted on a horse. Then the millstone of affairs will turn against you, and will agitate you like the twirl of its axis. This is my father's promise on behalf of my grandfather.

"So gather your powers and your partners, then let not your affair be a worry to you, then finish my case and respite me not;" "Truly I have put my trust in God—my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature that crawls but He hath taken it by the forelock; truly my Lord is on a straight path."[45]

O God, withhold the sky from raining upon them, send unto them years of famine like the time of Joseph, and give dominance over them to the youth of Thaqīf,[46] so that he makes them taste a cup of utter bitterness; for they have indeed repudiated us. They have left us alone, but Thou art our Lord, "in Thee we trust, unto Thee we turn, and to Thee is the return."[47]

19. The Poems that the Imām's recited as his War Cry on the Day of 'Āshūrā' in Expressing his Merits

It is narrated that the army of Ibn Ziyād closed up their circle around the Imām, blocked him from water, and eventually killed all of his companions. Then an arrow was fired at the Imām's infant boy, by which he was killed.

The Imām imbued himself by the infant's blood and dug a hole by his sword, in which he buried the baby. Then he confronted the army and cried out these lines as he fought:

غَدَرَ الْقَوْمُ وَقِدْماً رَغِبُوا عَنْ ثَوَابِ اللهِ رَبِّ الثَّقَلَيْن
قَتَلُوا قِدْماً عَلِيّاً وَابْنَهُ حَسَنَ الْخَيْرِ كَرِيمَ الطَّرَفَيْن
حَسَداً مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوا أَجْمِعُوا نُقْبِلِ الْآنَ جَمِيعاً بِالْحُسَيْن
يَا لَقَوْمٍ لِأُنَاسٍ رُذَّلٍ جَمَعُوا الْجَمْعَ لِأَهْلِ الْحَرَمَيْن
ثُمَّ سَارُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا كُلُّهُمْ لِاجْتِيَاحِي، لِلرِّضَا بِالْمُلْحِدَيْن
لَمْ يَخَافُوا اللهَ فِي سَفْكِ دَمِي لِعُبَيْدِ اللهِ نَسْلِ الْفَاجِرَيْن
وَابْنُ سَعْدٍ قَدْ رَمَانِي عَنْوَةً بِجُنُودٍ كَوُكُوفِ الْهَاطِلَيْن

لَا لِشَيْءٍ كَانَ مِنِّي قَبْلَ ذَا   غَيْرِ فَخْرِي بِضِيَاءِ الْفَرْقَدَيْن
بِعَلِيٍّ خَيْرِ مَنْ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ   وَالنَّبِيِّ الْقُرَشِيِّ الْوَالِدَيْن
خَيْرَةُ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْخَلْقِ أَبِي   ثُمَّ أُمِّي فَأَنَا ابْنُ الْخَيْرَتَيْن
فِضَّةٌ قَدْ صُفِيَتْ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ   فَأَنَا الْفِضَّةُ وَابْنُ الذَّهَبَيْن
مَنْ لَهُ جَدٌّ كَجَدِّي فِي الْوَرَى   أَوْ كَشَيْخِي فَأَنَا ابْنُ الْقَمَرَيْن
فَاطِمُ الزَّهْرَاءِ أُمِّي وَأَبِي   قَاصِمُ الْكُفْرِ بِبَدْرٍ وَحُنَيْن
وَلَهُ فِي يَوْمِ أُحُدٍ وَقْعَةٌ   شَفَتِ الْغِلَّ بِفَضِّ الْعَسْكَرَيْن
ثُمَّ بِالْأَحْزَابِ وَالْفَتْحِ مَعاً   كَانَ فِيهَا حَتْفُ أَهْلِ الْقِبْلَتَيْن
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ؛ مَاذَا صَنَعَتْ   أُمَّةُ السَّوْءِ مَعاً بِالْعِتْرَتَيْن
عِتْرَةِ الْبَرِّ النَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى   وَعَلِيِّ الْوَرْدِ بَيْنَ الْجَحْفَلَيْن

They've disbelieved, and ignored for long,
Allah's reward, to Whom all belong.

They killed 'Alī and also his son,
Ḥasan, the son of the most noble ones.

They said with envy, "Gather around
Ḥusayn it is, that we shall surround."

Medina and Mecca they haven't spared,
The basest of armies they have prepared.

Gathered for my death, and what is their motif?
Just to gratify the chiefs of disbelief [i.e. Yazīd and 'Ubayd-Allāh].[48]

The son of the sinners, the son of Ziyād,
In shedding my blood; do they fear God?

Ibn Sa'd has imposed on me this pain,
An army so huge like drops of rain.

And I had no sins, ever, so far,
But being honored by two great stars:

From the tribe of Quraysh, the Prophet of God,
And the best after him, 'Alī, is that odd?

My parents were both chosen by God,
So I am the son of a noble squad.

From gold, it happens, that silver unfolds,
I am a silver, the son of two golds.

A grandfather like mine is the best of the boons,
And a father like mine; I'm the son of two moons.

Zahrā' is my mother; and my father you shall know
In Badr and Ḥunayn, he defeated the foe.

On the day of Uḥud, he truly was a pride,
The hearts of the believers by him were satisfied.

Also in Mecca, and the battle of the Tribes,
So hard on Muslims that no one can describe.

For the sake of God he fought, and thus
This is the reply by the people to us;

The clan of the Prophet, and 'Alī the brave;
The Prophet is turned by this in his grave.[49]

'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Ammār said, "I had not seen anyone being attacked by such a large army, having lost all of his children, family and companions, and yet have such a strong heart, calm soul, and steady steps like Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī. When he attacked the enemy, they would all run away and none of them would dare facing him."

Thus 'Umar ibn Sa'd called on to his army, "This is the son of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who killed so many! Close up the circle on him and attack him from every side!"[50]

20. The Final Words of the Imām with the Enemy

The Imām was surrounded by four thousand archers,[51] who separated between him and the tents of his family and women-folk (his *ḥaram*, literally sanctuary). The Master of the Martyrs (peace be upon him) cried out to them,

يَا شِيعَةَ ءَالِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ! إنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ دِينٌ وَكُنْتُمْ لَا تَخَافُونَ الْمَعَادَ،
فَكُونُوا أَحْرَاراً فِي دُنْيَاكُمْ! وَارْجِعُوا إِلَى أَحْسَابِكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ عُرْباً كَمَا تَزْعُمُونَ!

O followers of Abū Sufyān's family! If you have no religion and you fear not the Hereafter, then be liberated souls in your life in this world. If you are truly Arabs—as you claim to be—then turn to your filiations [and adhere to the noble values of Arabs].

Shimr called on to the Imām, "What do you say, O son of Fāṭimah?" The Imām replied,

I am fighting you and you are fighting me, but what is the fault of the women? Keep your rebels away from them as long as I am alive.

قَالَ: اقْصِدُونِي بِنَفْسِي وَاتْرُكُوا حَرَمِي قَدْ حانَ حِينِي وَقَدْ لَاحَتْ لَوَآئِحُهُ

He said: Come at myself and leave out my sanctuary. Indeed my end is near and its signs have appeared.[52]

Shimr said, "That is granted, O son of Fāṭimah." So the entire army turned to the Imām. The battle intensified, and the Imām's thirst became increasingly pressing on him.[53] The Imām returned to the tents to bid farewell to his family for a second time. Then he went back to the battlefield while reciting a lot, "There is no movement and no power save by God, the Supreme, the Magnificent."[54]

Abū al-Ḥutūf al-Juʿfī fired an arrow that hit the forehead of the Imām. He pulled it out, and thus blood flew down on his face. He said,

اللَهُمَّ إنَّكَ تَرَى مَا أَنَا فِيهِ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ هَؤُلاَءِ الْعُصَاةِ! اللَهُمَّ أَحْصِهِمْ عَدَداً!
وَاقْتُلْهُمْ بَدَداً! وَلَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنْهُمْ أَحَداً! وَلَا تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَبَداً!

> O God! Thou certainly seest what I am going through due to these sinful servants of Thine. O God, count them one by one; disunite them and make them be gone; leave of them on the earth no one; and forgive not of them anyone.

And he called out,

> يَا أُمَّةَ السَّوْءِ! بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمْ مُحَمَّداً فِي عِتْرَتِهِ! أَمَا إِنَّكُمْ لَا تَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلاً بَعْدِي فَتَهَابُونَ قَتْلَهُ، بَلْ يَهُونُ عَلَيْكُمْ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ قَتْلِكُمْ إِيَّايَ! وَأَيْمُ اللهِ لَأَرْجُو أَنْ يُكْرِمَنِي اللهُ بِالشَّهَادَةِ، ثُمَّ يَنْتَقِمَ لِي مِنْكُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ!

> O, evil people! So bad you have treated Muḥammad's family after him.
>
> Lo! After killing me, you will not fear killing anyone. Rather every murder will be easy for you after having killed me.
>
> I truly hope that God honors me by martyrdom, and then take my vengeance on you whence you know not.

Ḥuṣayn [ibn Numayr] said, "O, son of Fāṭimah! How will God take vengeance on us for killing you?" The Imām replied,

> He will provoke violence and vehemence amongst you such that you will shed the blood of one another. Then He will cast His punishment upon you like waves of the ocean![55]

21. The Imām's Prayers to God in his Final Moments and his Condition upon Martyrdom

The large number of wounds and injuries on his body completely exhausted the Imām. He stopped fighting to rest for a bit, but someone threw a stone at his forehead, and thus blood flew down on his face. When he wanted to clear the blood off his eyes by his clothes, another person pierced his heart with a three-edged arrow. The son of God's Messenger said,

بِسْمِ اللّهِ وَبِاللّهِ وَعَلَى مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللّهِ.

In the name of God; by God; and in the religion of the Messenger of God [it is thus that I am dying].

Then he turned his face up toward the sky and said,

إلَهِي! إنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ أنَّهُمْ يَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلاً لَيْسَ عَلَى وَجْهِ الأَرْضِ ابْنُ نَبِيٍّ غَيْرُهُ!

O God! Thou truly knowest that these people are killing someone but whom there is no son of a prophet on the face of the earth.

He grabbed the arrow by hand and pulled it out from his back, whereby blood gushed forth like rainwater flowing out of a waterspout. The Imām placed his palm under the wound, and thus it was filled with blood. Then he spattered the blood to the sky and said,

هَوَّنَ عَلَيَّ مَا نَزَلَ بِي أنَّهُ بِعَيْنِ اللّهِ.

This affliction is easy on me as it is surely before the eye of God.

Not a drop of that blood fell back on the earth. He placed his palm under the wound and filled it with blood for a second time, with which he imbued his noble head and beard, and said,

I shall remain like this until I meet my grandfather, the Messenger of God.[56]

He had lost so much blood that he was totally worn out. So he sat on the ground, while he could not hold up his head. Then Mālik ibn Busr drew near, swore at him, and hit him on the head with his sword. The Imām's *burnus* (long headdress) was filled with blood. He took it off, and then fastened his turban

(*'imāmah*) around a regular hat (*qalansuwah*), or according to some narrations he wrapped his head with a piece of cloth.[57]

Then Zur'ah ibn Sharīk hit the left shoulder [or hand] of the Imām, Ḥuṣayn [ibn Numayr] shot an arrow at his throat, and another person stroke his noble neck with a sword. Sinān ibn Anas hit the Imām's collarbone and then his chest with a spear, and also fired an arrow at his throat. Another spear by Ṣāliḥ ibn Wahab penetrated the side of the Imām.[58]

Hilāl ibn Nāfi' reports, "I was standing near Ḥusayn when he took his last breath. By God I had never seen someone being drenched in his own blood yet have such a bright and splendid face. Truly I was so absorbed by the light of his face that I could not think of killing him."[59]

The Imām raised his look to the sky in that condition and addressed the Lord of Majesty:

صَبْراً عَلَى قَضَآئِكَ يَا رَبِّ! لَا إِلَهَ سِوَاكَ، يَا غِيَاثَ الْمُسْتَغِيثِينَ!

> O Lord! I am patient over Thy decree. There is no deity but Thee. O, Helper of those who cry out for help![60]

It is narrated from Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (peace be upon him) that the horse of the Imām was neighing loudly, imbuing its head with his blood, sensing his odor, and saying [in its neigh], "So much oppression, so much injustice, by a people that have killed the son of the daughter of their Prophet!" Then it headed for the tents.

Umm Kulthūm cried out, "O, Muḥammad! O, father! O, 'Alī! O, Ja'far! O, Ḥamzah! This is Ḥusayn who has fallen down in the dry desert of Karbalā'."[61]

Zaynab called out, "O, brother! O, our master! O, our dear ones! I wish the heavens would have fallen on the earth, and the mountains would have smashed over the deserts."[62] She headed for her brother, where she found 'Umar ibn Sa'd and a group of his army near her brother Ḥusayn, who was gasping his last breaths.

"O, 'Umar!" She shouted, "Is Abū 'Abd-Allāh being killed while you are watching?" 'Umar turned his face away, while his beard was soaked in tears. Zaynab cried out, "Woe on you! Is there not a single Muslim amongst you?!"

"Dismount, and finish him off," 'Umar ibn Sa'd ordered. Shimr rushed forth toward the Imām, kicked his body, and sat on his chest, smiting him with twelve strikes of the sword. Then he grabbed the noble beard of the Imām and cut off his head.[63]

The Poems of the Late Nayyir Tabrīzī

Ḥujjat al-Islām Nayyir Tabrīzī has superbly depicted the state and condition of all beings as the Imām was killed:

Sacrificed for you our souls be indeed!
People over there in the desert of death
Forgot the troubles of the Day to Come
Watching you give your soul and your breath.

In the world of angels and the veil of divine
Sacred spirits were sitting in grief;
With hairs disheveled, and clothes torn apart
Houris ran away calling for relief.

The screams of demons and the shouts of the jinn
Filled the ears of the heavens above;
The roar of the beasts and the screech of the birds
Were heard across the earth thereof.

Noah was immersed in a sea of awe
Seeing your lips, in thirst and need;
Job was looking with pain and esteem
The award of patience he had to concede.

Calling for help from God All-Mighty
'Alī's heart was burning and strained;

The chest of Prophet flaming in rage
Puzzled at the scene, feeling enchained.

People of Kūfah going for spoils
Showing no respect for a tent or a veil;
The women and the kids like a herd of deer
Roaming in desert in howl and wail.

The prophets of God staring stunned
The angels were looking silent and shy;
Shimr was sunk in a world of desire
And you were in presence of God, so High.[64]

The Poems of the Late Āyatullāh Shaʿrānī

The late Āyatullāh Shaʿrānī has beautifully narrated the Imām's martyrdom in these meaningful lines:

The crowns of the kings thrown on the ground,
For a spear was adorned by the king of love.

No head can touch the feet of the Friend,
Unless it's raised on the spear of love.

In no time he flew beyond this world,
A prophet ascending to the heaven of love.

An eternal address by this king's Beloved:
"Be ransomed for thee the spirit of love.

Thou art Mine and I am thy price,
Be ransomed for thee the world of love."[65]

All praise is to God and all bounties are from Him. The compilation of this treatise was done in one week during first ten days of Muḥarram—the days of mourning for the Imām. Its writing was completed by the mercy of the most Merciful on 9 Muḥarram 1402 AH (6 November 1981 CE).

O, our Lord! Resurrect us with Ḥusayn and those who were martyred before him. And O, our Lord, accept our prayers!

The two worlds compose a feast of love,
But the candle of warmth is none but Ḥusayn.

The one who composed these noble jewels
Is the dust on the way of none but Ḥusayn.

Written by the sinful hands of this destitute transient lover, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, in the splendid city of Mashhad of Imām Riḍā, may thousands of mercies and honors be upon its source of sanctity, by Muḥammad and his righteous noble progeny.

The Author's Poems in Describing and Praising Imām Ḥusayn, peace be upon him

May God send peace and mercy upon thee, O Abā Abd-Allāh,
and upon those who were martyred before thee.
The blessed birthday anniversary of the Master of the Martyrs,
may our souls and the souls of everyone be ransomed for him
3 Sha'bān 1378 – 11 February 1959

Allah's light, and the mirror of the Truth,
Is the light of guidance, none but Ḥusayn.

The secret of love, the bright pearl of God,
Is the sign of the Just, none but Ḥusayn.

The Divine flash of the Essence of God,
Was a shining ray of none but Ḥusayn.

The Divine decree, that brought out the world
And all the beings, was none but Ḥusayn.

The Essence of the One, if appears uncovered,
Is the ray that gleams from none but Ḥusayn.

All the angels in front of Adam,
Fell on their knees, for none but Ḥusayn.

The ordered series of all the prophets,
Was the front line of the army of none but Ḥusayn.

The creation of the world from beginning to the end,
Its purpose and fruit was none but Ḥusayn.

The two worlds compose a feast of love,
But the candle of warmth is none but Ḥusayn.

The gracious breeze of paradise is but
A share of aroma of none but Ḥusayn.

Nimrod's fire was cool for Abraham
By the mercy of sweat of none but Ḥusayn.

Noah's ark in the turbulent flood
Was a boat in the river of none but Ḥusayn.

When Moses headed for the Mount on his date,
His tryst was to meet none but Ḥusayn.

The shining light in the hillside on the right
Was a flash of the face of none but Ḥusayn.

The blazing flame in Mount Sinai
Was a flare of the light of none but Ḥusayn.

The reviving breath of Jesus is a branch
Of the breath and the scent of none but Ḥusayn.

The orbit of planets in heavens above
Is the arc of the brow of none but Ḥusayn.

What more do you want; for everything in the world
Is tagging along none but Ḥusayn.

The torch of unity that glows like the sun
Is kindled tonight by none but Ḥusayn.

The one whose throat was kissed with love
By the Prophet, as he cried, is none but Ḥusayn.

Present in the party of the vision of God
Is the luminous head of none but Ḥusayn.

The moth that burnt in a fire of zeal
In the world of love is none but Ḥusayn.

Torn into pieces in the way of God
The ransomed soul was none but Ḥusayn.

The one who settled in eternal bliss
Beyond the two worlds was none but Ḥusayn.

The one who said, "I'm pleased, O Lord!"
In the altar of Beloved was none but Ḥusayn.

Drenched and imbued by the blood of his throat
Was the tress of silk of none but Ḥusayn.

The source of relief from the ocean of grief
Is the boat of rescue of none but Ḥusayn.

Everyone will hope to intercede for them
The grace and bounty of none but Ḥusayn.

If you wish to achieve salvation indeed,
The way is to follow none but Ḥusayn.

The one who composed these noble jewels
Is the dust on the way of none but Ḥusayn.

Our Lord! Resurrect us with Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, and admit us among his group. And O, our Lord, accept our prayers!

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ḥusaynī al-Ṭihrānī

Notes

[1] The Holy Qur'ān, 21:73.
[2] *Nahj al-balāghah* (Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ edition), Sermon 233.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] Qāḍī Nūr-Allāh Shūshtarī (d. 1019/1610), *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil* (Qom, 197-), 11:594, quoted from Ibn Ḥusnawayh, *Baḥr al-manāqib* (manuscript), p. 128, narrating from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) that "Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī, peace be upon him, appeared among his companions and said...".
[5] [tr] A similar supplication has been narrated from Imām 'Alī in *Nahj al-balāghah*, Sermon 131.
[6] Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl* (Qom, 1984), p. 239.
[7] Qur'ān, 11:88.
[8] 'Abbās Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, (Beirut, 1992), p. 69, quoted from Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Beirut, 1983), 44:329-330, narrating from Muḥammad ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Mūsawī; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:602, quoted from Muwaffaq ibn Aḥmad al-Makkī (Khwārazmī), *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* (Qom, 1418/1998), 1:273.
[9] "...lest they are passed on to others." Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:127.
[10] 'Alī ibn 'Īsá al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah* (Beirut, 1985), 2:239-240. The late Mirzā Nūrī has also reported parts of this sermon from *Kashf al-ghummah* and *Biḥār al-anwār* in *Mustadrik al-wasā'il* (Beirut, 1988), 12:343, 356 and 369.
[11] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:126, quoted from Sabzawārī, *Jāmi' al-akhbār*, also called *Ma'ārij al-yaqīn fī uṣūl al-dīn* (Beirut, 1993), p. 359. However, the narration in *Jāmi' al-akhbār* is from 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them. [tr: The author of *Jāmi' al-akhbār* is not known with certainty. See the editor's introduction on *ibid.*, and also Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī, *al-Dharī'ah* (Beirut, 1983), 5:33ff.]
[12] Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Mufīd, *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ* (Qom, 1416/1995), p. 225; Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh al-Ṣadūq), *al-Amālī* (Qom, 1417/1996), p. 268. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 68:208 and 75:126, quoted from *al-Amālī* and *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, respectively.
[13] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:128, quoted from Daylamī, *A'lām al-dīn* (Qom, 1987), p. 298.
[14] Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, p. 248; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:120, quoted from *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*.
[15] Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, p. 246; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:118, quoted from *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*.
[16] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh* (Beirut, 1965), 3:460.

[17] In another narration, after "deny it if it is a lie" he said, "Hear what I have to say and write down my speech, then return to your cities and tribes, and whoever you find trustworthy and reliable, call them...". Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Beirut, 1983), 33:182.

[18] Qur'ān, 61:8.

[19] [tr] See Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut, 1983), 5:300; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl* (Beirut, 1989), 11:608.

[20] [tr] See Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (Beirut, 1978), 3:17; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl*, 1:186-187 and 13:104.

[21] [tr] See Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq* (Beirut, 1995), 42:268 and 283; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl*, 13:123 and 14:81.

[22] The *Kitāb* of Sulaym ibn Qays, no. 26, part 5; Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ṭabarsī, *al-Iḥtijāj* (Najaf, 1966), 2:18-19.

[23] Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf 'alá qatlá al-ṭufūf* (Qom, 1414/1993), pp. 126-127; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 148; al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:239. Narrated with minor variations in Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:8. Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:598-599, quoted from *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* and Madūkh, *al-'Adl al-shāhid* (Cairo, 1970), pp. 59-60. [tr: Note that *al-Luhūf* and *al-Malhūf* are alternative titles of the same book.]

[24] Al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:238.

[25] Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:647, quoted from al-Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-mawaddah* (Tehran: Dār al-Uswah, 1416/1995), 3:81. The late Muḥaddith al-Qummī and 'Allāmah Majlisī have narrated these lines and have quoted from Muḥammad ibn Abī Ṭālib that "In his book on history, Abū 'Alī al-Salāmī has mentioned that these lines by themselves show that they are composed by Ḥusayn, peace be upon him; no one has composed poems like these;" see *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 321, and *Biḥār al-anwār*, 45:49.

[26] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 44:195, quoted from al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:241-242.

[27] This sermon has been narrated by prominent sources of both Shī'ites and Sunnis. See Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, p. 245; al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:242; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 138; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, pp. 172-173; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:116-117, quoted from *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*. Also see Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:596 and 605, quoted from Tawfīq Abū 'Alam, *al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī* (the fourth book of *Ahl al-Bayt* series), (Cairo, 1986), p. 73, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk* (Cairo, 1939), 4:305, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih al-Andulusī, *'Iqd al-farīd* (Beirut, 1997), 5:129, al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr* (Cairo, 1984), 3:114-115, Abū Na'īm al-Iṣbahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'* (Beirut, 1988), 2:39, Khwārazmī,

Maqtal al-Ḥusayn, 2:7, Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq* (Beirut, 1995), 14:217-218, Muḥibb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd-Allāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-'uqbá* (Cairo, 1356/1937), pp. 149-150, Bā Kathīr al-Ḥaḍramī, *Wasīlat al-ma'āl* (manuscript), p. 198, al-Zabīdī, *Itḥāf al-sādah al-muttaqīn* (Misr, 1311/1893), 10:320, and from al-Dhahabī, who has narrated it in *Tārīkh al-Islām* (Beirut, 1987-), 5:12, and *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'* (Beirut, 1993), 3:310.

[28] Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, p. 245; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:337.

[29] Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Mufīd, *al-Irshād* (Beirut, 1993), 2:81; Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan Ṭabarsī, *I'lām al-wará bi-a'lām al-hudá* (Qom, 1417/1996), 1:449-450; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 173.

[30] Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:601, quoted from Abū 'Alam, *al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī*, p. 83.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] The Imām means that what you are calling me to—i.e. submission to the order of Yazīd and 'Ubayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād—is a shame and disgrace for me, and death is better for me than that. Nevertheless, it is wrong that you do not refrain from fighting me on the account that it would be a dishonor for you, because dishonor is better than entering the fire of hell. What the Imām is saying here is contrary to what 'Umar (the second caliph) said when he was dying. There, Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) told him, "Confess that you took over the caliphate which was mine." 'Umar replied, "flame but not shame (*al-nār wa lā al-'ār*)," i.e. it would be a disgrace for me to confess so, and I rather choose the fire [of hell] and not take that disgrace. See Sayyid Hāshim al-Baḥrānī, *Madīnat al-ma'ājiz* (Qom, 1413/1992), 2:96; and also *Nahj al-balāghah*, Sermon 192. Imām Ḥusayn's poem is reported in al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:242; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:634, quoted from al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn* (Cairo, 1947), 3:236, and Abū 'Alam, *al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī*, p. 83; also quoted from Daylamī, *A'lām al-dīn*, p. 298 in Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 75:128, and Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 322.

[33] Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:304; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 172; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:609; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:48. The late Majlisī has reported this sermon as a letter that the Imām wrote to the people of Kūfah when he first entered Karbalā'; *Biḥār al-anwār*, 44:381-382.

[34] Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:603, quoted from Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:335.

[35] Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, 2:91-92; Ṭabarsī, *I'lām al-wará*, 1:244; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 205; Sayyid 'Abd al-Rāziq al-Muqarram (d. 1391/1972), *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmī, 1979), pp. 212-213, quoted from Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:317, and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:57-58; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:611, quoted from Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr, and also from Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:349-350, and al-Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-mawaddah*, 3:65.

[36] Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, 2:96; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, pp. 215-216; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah* (Beirut, 1988), 8:183; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:613, quoted from Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:321; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 226, quoted from Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:60-61, and Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 14:217. Kaf'amī has reported it as a supplication made by the Prophet on the day of battle of Badr, *al-Miṣbāḥ* (Beirut, 1983), pp. 299-300. Along with its chain of transmission, Shaykh al-Ṭūsī has narrated from Rayyān ibn al-Ṣalt that "I heard 'Alī ibn Musá al-Riḍā praying to God with certain words which I memorized. Then whenever I prayed to God by those words, He resolved my difficulty." Then he mentions the same supplication [with minor variations] with the following addition at the end:

فَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ كَثيراً، وَلَكَ الْمَنُّ فاضِلاً. بِنِعْمَتِكَ تَتِمُّ الصَّالِحاتُ. يا مَعْروفاً
بِالْمَعْروفِ مَعْروفٌ، يا مَنْ هُوَ بِالْمَعْروفِ مَوْصوفٌ! أَنِلْني مِنْ مَعْروفِكَ مَعْروفاً
تُغنِيني بِهِ عَنْ مَعْروفِ مَنْ سِواكَ؛ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرّاحِمينَ.

So unto Thee belongeth ample praise, and Thine are abundant bounties. Good deeds are completed by Thy bounty. O, One Who is known: known by good! O, One Who is characterized by good! Benefit me from Thy good such a benefit that would make me needless of the good of others. By Thy mercy, O most Merciful of all merciful.

Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī has narrated the supplication up to "and Thine are abundant bounties" with minor variations from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in *al-Bāqiyāt al-ṣāliḥāt*, under *bāb* 4, *faṣl* 10 (published along with *Mafātīḥ al-jinān*). The same has been narrated by Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs from Imām Ṣādiq in *Muhaj al-da'awāt* (Qom, 1411/1911), p. 269. He has also narrated that the Messenger of God

recited this supplication (up to the same point) on the day of battle of Badr, and has narrated the full supplication from Imām Riḍā in *ibid.*, pp. 97 and 270, respectively.

[37] Verses 10:71 and 7:196 of the Qur'ān, respectively.

[38] [tr] See Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 3:3; Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 5:321.

[39] [tr] His name has been read as both Shimr and Shamir.

[40] The phrase is from the Qur'ān, 22:11.

[41] [tr] Most of the sources cited below have narrated this sentence as "I will not give in [to them] with dishonor, and I will not admit (*iqrār*) to be a slave [of them]." Some of them have narrated it as "...and I will not escape (*firār*) like slaves."

[42] Verses 44:20 and 40:27 of the Qur'ān, respectively. Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, 2:97-98; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, pp. 216-218; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:357-358; Ṭabarsī, *I'lām al-warā*, pp. 458-459; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, pp. 227-229, quoted from Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:322-323, Muḥammad ibn Abī Ṭālib Ḥā'irī al-Karakī, *Tasliyat al-majālis wa zīnat al-majālis* (*Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*) (Qom, 1418/1998), 2:274, and Ibn Namā al-Ḥillī, *Muthīr al-aḥzān* (Beirut, 2004), pp. 80-81; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:615-616 and 621-622, quoted from Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah*, 8:193-194, and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:61-63.

[43] [tr] Cursing or *la'n*, as mentioned in the Qur'ān and permitted in the narrations, is not the same as swearing or uttering obscene words. It is not a form of impolite or rude language, but it is rather a form of prayer and supplication (*du'ā'*)—that is, a prayer against and in disfavor of someone. In this sense, when God curses a people, it means that He deprives them of His mercy, and when a person curses a people, it means that the person is praying to God to not show mercy to those people. Praying for the righteous servants of God and praying against the enemies of God (those who *knowingly* and *willingly* insist on going astray) are two sides of the same coin, and are two traditions (*sunnah*) of God in the Qur'ān. Cursing has been attributed to God and other-than-God in many places in the Qur'ān, such as 2:88-289, 159, 161; 3:61, 87; 4:52, 93; 5:13, 78; 7:44; 9:68; 11:18, 60; 33:57, 64.

[44] [The author's explanations on the first three lines] 1. We are never defeated, for our intention and desire was to bring about self-restraint and rectitude, and there is no defeat for such a goal. 2. If we are fighting, it is not in fear of our lives. We fight because we do not want the enemy to have any dominance over us, and they will

not have any power over us as long as we are alive. 3. Yet, there is no escape from death, and there is no solution for it.

[45] Verses 10:71 and 11:56 of the Qur'ān, respectively.

[46] [tr] Here the Imām is foretelling the rise of Ḥajjāj to power. Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (40-95/660-714) was perhaps the most ruthless and bloodthirsty ruler in the history of Islam. He ruled over the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq and the Islamic lands to the east of Iraq for over twenty years, and is notorious for his corruption, violence, and bloodshed. He killed over 120,000 people, and when he died, there were another 50,000 in his prisons. It was under his command that the Holy Ka'bah was demolished by catapult. Ḥajjāj had an immense hatred toward Imām 'Alī, and prosecuted and killed thousands of his followers. Yet he knew the whole Qur'ān by heart.

[47] Qur'ān, 60:4. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, pp. 155-157; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, pp. 222-225; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:9-10; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*. pp. 234-235; Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:624-625; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 14:218-219; al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:28-29. It has been narrated as the Imām's letter to the people of Kūfah in Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, pp. 240-242. Ṭabarsī has narrated the sermon through Muṣ'ab ibn 'Abd-Allāh until the end of the poem, in *al-Iḥtijāj*, 2:24-25.

[48] [tr] Given the following lines, the two chiefs of disbelief mentioned here might be Ibn Sa'd and 'Ubayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād.

[49] Al-Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghummah*, 2:237; Ṭabarsī, *al-Iḥtijāj*, 2:25-26; Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 320. Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 11:644 has quoted nine lines of the poem (lines 1-3 and 10-15) from *Wasīlat al-ma'āl* (n.p., n.d.), p. 178, reporting that the Imām recited these lines when his infant son was killed. It has then quoted 25 lines including the above lines from al-Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-mawaddah*, 3:80-81, and 'Abd al-Ghaffār al-Hāshimī al-Afghānī, *A'immah al-hudá* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 104.

[50] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 275, quoted from Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf* 170, and Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, 4:345.

[51] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 275; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib-i āl-i Abī Ṭālib* (Najaf, 1956), 3:258.

[52] Part of a long poem by Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī ibn Murtaḍá Baḥr al-'Ulūm (d. 1212/1797), fully quoted in *Turāthunā* Journal (Qom, Muḥarram 1408/1987), year 3, 10:214.

[53] Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 171; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:38; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 275, quoted from *al-Malhūf*.

[54] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 278, quoted from Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 171.

[55] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 278, quoted from 'Abd-Allāh Baḥrānī, *Maqtal al-'awālim* (litho., Tabrīz, 1295/1878), p. 98, Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, pp. 323-324, and Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:38-39.

[56] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 45:46 and 53; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, pp. 278-279, quoted from Qummī, *Nafas al-mahmūm*, p. 325, Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:39, and Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 169.

[57] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 45:53; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 172; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, pp. 279-280, quoted from Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:75, and Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:39-40.

[58] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 281, quoted from 'Abd-Allāh al-Shabrāwī, *al-Itḥāf bi-ḥubb al-ashrāf* (Qom, 2002), p. 123, and Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, pp. 174-175.

[59] Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 45:57; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 177; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 282, quoted from Ibn Namā al-Ḥillī, *Muthīr al-aḥzān*, p. 112, and Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn, *al-Majālis al-saniyyah* (Najaf, n.d.), *majlis* 89, 1:143.

[60] Al-Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-mawaddah*, 3:82; al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 283, quoted from al-Fāḍil al-Darbandī, *Iksīr al-'ibādāt fī as-rār al-shahādāt* (Manāmah, 1994), 3:68.

[61] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 284, quoted from Raḍī ibn Amīn al-Qazwīnī, *Taẓallum al-Zahrā'* (Qom, 1405/1985), pp. 214-215, Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 44:308, and Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:43.

[62] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 284, quoted from Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Malhūf*, p. 175.

[63] Al-Muqarram, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, p. 284, quoted from Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 4:78, Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, 2:112, Baḥrānī, *Maqtal al-'awālim*, p. 100, and Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, 2:41.

[64] Muḥammad Taqī Nayyir Mamqānī (Tabrīzī), *Majmū'ah-yi ash'ār (Ātashkadah)* (Tabriz, 1336/1918), pp. 173-174.

[65] Mentioned in the footnote on page 257 of the Persian translation of Abbās Qummī's *Nafas al-mahmūm* by Abū al-Ḥasan Sha'rānī, titled *Dam' al-sujūm* (Tehran, 1369/1950).

Notes on Prominent Figures Cited in the Text

'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Ammār ibn Yaghūth: A companion of Imām 'Alī. He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalā', and watched the last minutes of Imām Ḥusayn's life.

'Abd-Allāh ibn Ja'far (1-90/622-709): Imām 'Alī's nephew and his son-in-law through Zaynab. He was famous for his generosity, and was a close companion and supporter of Imāms 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn. He was not present in Karbalā', but he sent his wife and his two sons, 'Awn and Muḥammad, along with the Imām. His two sons were killed in Karbalā'. He is buried in Medina.

Abū Bakr ibn Abī Quḥāfah (c. 50 BH – 13 AH/573-634): The Prophet's father-in-law, an early convert to Islam, and the first caliph after the Prophet's death. He is known as *al-Ṣiddīq* (most truthful). He is buried in Medina.

Abū Hurayrah al-Dawsī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣakhr (c. 21 BH – 57 AH/600-77): A companion of the Prophet, who embraced Islam four years before the Prophet's demise. Despite this short period of company, and that he was not among the closest companions to the Prophet, he tops all of the companions in the number of Prophetic narrations reported from him by Sunni sources. He is buried in Medina.

Abū al-Ḥutūf al-Ju'fī, Ziyād ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān: He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalā', and fired an arrow that hit the forehead of the Imām.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Sa'd ibn Mālik (20 BH – 74 AH/602-93): A companion of the Prophet, who was highly knowledgeable and had a strong memory. He was a supporter of Imām 'Alī and a narrator of the tradition of *Ghadīr*. He is buried in Medina.

'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (c. 23 BH – 40 AH/600-61): The cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad, and the first one to accept

Islam and Muḥammad's prophethood. He is the first Imām of the Shī'ites, and the fourth caliph. He was born in the Ka'bah. Shī'ites use the title Amīr al-Mu'minīn (Commander of the Faithful) exclusively for him. *Nahj al-balāghah* is a collection of his sermons, letters, and sayings. He is buried in Najaf.

'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sajjād (38-95/659-713): The fourth Imām of the Shī'ites, and the only adult male survivor of Imām Ḥusayn's army in Karbalā'. He was known for the extent of his worship and prayer. *Al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* is a collection of his supplications, and *Risālat al-ḥuqūq* is an epistle of his description of one's duties in various aspects. He is buried in Medina.

'Alī ibn Mūsá al-Riḍā (148-203/765-818): The eighth Imām of the Shī'ites. He was summoned by al-Ma'mūn (Abbasid caliph) from Medina to Marw by force, to be appointed as the caliph's successor, though al-Ma'mūn himself poisoned and killed him. He is buried in Mashhad.

Anas ibn Mālik (10 BH – 93 AH/612-712): A companion of the Prophet, who accepted Islam in childhood and was a servant of the Prophet until he passed away. More than two thousand prophetic traditions have been transmitted through him. He is buried in Medina.

Ash'ath ibn Qays, Ma'dīkarib (23 BH – 42 AH/599-662): He met the Prophet in the last year of his life and embraced Islam, but apostatized and reverted from Islam after the Prophet's death. He was captured by the Muslims, but the first caliph pardoned him and gave him his sister in marriage. He was a companion of Imām 'Alī and one of his army generals in the battle of Ṣiffīn, but turned against the Imām and led his tribe to force the Imām to accept the Arbitration (*ḥakamiyyah*). He was also involved in Imām 'Alī's assassination. His daughter was the wife of Imām Ḥasan, through whom Mu'āwiyah poisoned the Imām, and his sons fought against Imām Ḥusayn.

Burayr ibn al-Khuḍayr al-Hamdānī (d. 61/680): An ascetic, reciter, and teacher of the Qur'ān from Kūfah. He was a supporter of Imām Ḥusayn and was killed in Karbalā'.

Farazdaq (Hammām) ibn Ghālib (c. 20-110/641-728): A great poet and master of Arabic, who was also a supporter of Ahl al-Bayt. He is buried in Basra.

Farwah ibn Musayk al-Murādī: A companion of the Prophet, who was his appointee over three Yemeni tribes.

Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (c. 8 BH – 11 AH/615-32): The Prophet's daughter, Imām 'Alī's wife, and one of the fourteen Infallibles (*ma'ṣūmīn*) in Shī'ism. She is buried in Medina.

Ḥabīb ibn Maẓāhir (d. 61/680): A companion and student of Imām 'Alī in Kūfah, who knew the Qur'ān by heart and used to recite the whole Book in a single night. He was among a group who wrote a letter to Imām Ḥusayn, inviting him to come to Kūfah to lead them against Yazīd. He joined the Imām and was killed in Karbalā'.

Ḥajjār ibn Abjur: A convert to Islam from Christianity, and a major figure in Kūfah. He wrote to Imām Ḥusayn inviting him to come to Kūfah, but then he changed sides and fought against the Imām as a commander of a thousand soldiers in Yazīd's army. He then joined Mukhtār to avenge the blood of Ḥusayn.

Ḥamzah ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (c. 57 BH – 3 AH/565-625): The Prophet's uncle, and his brother by milk. He was an early convert to Islam and a steadfast supporter of the Prophet. He was named "the lion of God and His Messenger". He fought courageously in the battles of Badr and Uḥud, and was killed in the latter, which tremendously grieved the Prophet. The Prophet's Household used to mention him with great respect and honor. He was titled "Master of the Martyrs" before Imām Ḥusayn's martyrdom.

Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (3-50/625-70): The Prophet's grandson and the second Imām of the Shī'ites, known as Mujtabá. He was forced

into accepting Mu'āwiyah's caliphate after the assassination of his father, Imām 'Alī. He is buried in Medina.

Hilāl ibn Nāfi: He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalā' and has reported what happened on the day of battle, including the last minutes of Imām Ḥusayn's life.

Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Riyāḥī (d. 61/680): A prominent figure from Kūfah and the head of an army of a thousand who stopped Imām Ḥusayn on his way from Mecca to Kūfah. He repented in the morning of 'Āshūrā' and joined the Imām, who informed him that his repentance was accepted by God. The Imām granted him permission to fight right away, and thus he became the first martyr in battle from the Imām's army. The word *ḥurr* means one who is free and liberated.

Ḥuṣayn ibn Numayr (d. 66/686): One of the supporters and army commanders of the Umayyads, who fought against Imām 'Alī in the battle of Ṣiffīn. He was one of Ibn Ziyād's generals in Iraq and fought against Imām Ḥusayn in Karbalā'. He was in charge of setting up the catapult that destroyed the Ka'bah, and commanded the Umayyad army against the Tawwābīn uprising. He was killed by Mukhtār's army.

Ibn 'Abbās, 'Abd-Allāh (c. 3 BH – 68 AH/618-87): The cousin and companion of the Prophet and Imām 'Alī. He is known as the "exegete" (*mufassir*) of the Qur'ān. He died and was buried in Ṭā'if.

Jābir ibn 'Abd-Allāh al-Anṣārī (c. 16 BH – 78 AH/606-97): A companion of the Prophet, who lived long enough to see up to the fifth Imām. He was an intimate follower of the Household of the Prophet.

Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib (c. 33 BH – 8 AH/589-629): The Prophet's cousin, Imām 'Alī's brother, and an early Muslim. The Prophet and his Household held him very dear before and after his death. He lost his two hands and took ninety wounds in the battle of Mu'tah before being killed. The Prophet said that God has given him two wings to fly in paradise, and thus he is known as Ja'far "the flier" (*al-Ṭayyār*).

Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (80-148/699-765): The sixth Imām of the Shī'ites, and a descendent of Abū Bakr from the mother's side. He witnessed the fall of the Umayyad rule and the rise of the Abbasids to power. The socio-political conditions of his time gave him the opportunity to educate many students in a range of Islamic sciences. He is buried in Medina.

Mālik ibn Busr (d. 66/686): He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalā', and was killed by Mukhtār's army later on.

Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (2-65/623-685): He was 'Uthmān's cousin and son-in-law, and one of the Umayyads. He got very close to 'Uthmān during his caliphate and had a great influence over his decisions. The defects in 'Uthmān's caliphate—which led to his assassination—were largely due to him. He fought against Imām 'Alī in the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn. He rose to caliphate in 64 AH (684 CE), and his progeny ruled until 132 (750). He was suffocated by his wife, who was previously married to Yazīd.

Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān (20 BH – 60 AH/602-680): The ruler of Syria at the time of the second and third caliphs, and the founder of the Umayyad dynasty later on. He waged a major civil war and several violent attacks during Imām 'Alī's caliphate on the pretext of avenging 'Uthmān's murder. He was responsible for the poisoning of the second Shī'ite Imām. He is buried in Damascus.

Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bāqir (57-114/676-733): The fifth Imām of the Shī'ites, and the son of Imām Ḥasan's daughter. He was a little child that witnessed the event of Karbalā'. The declining Umayyad rule gave him the opportunity to revive and spread the Islamic sciences and set the grounds for his son Ja'far. He is buried in Medina.

Muḥammad ibn Ḥanafiyyah (21-81/642-700): Imām 'Alī's son, and a man of knowledge and courage. He fought bravely in Imām 'Alī's army, and was a chief commander in the battle of Jamal.

Muslim ibn ʻAqīl (d. 60/680): Imām ʻAlī's nephew and son-in-law. He was a close supporter and a trusted companion of Imām Ḥusayn. When the people of Kūfah repeatedly wrote to the Imām in 60 AH (680 CE) urging him to come to Kūfah to lead them against Yazīd, the Imām sent Muslim as his representative in a group of delegates. Over 18,000 people pledged allegiance to him, but most of them left him alone when ʻUbayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād entered Kūfah as the new governor and filled the city with terror and threat. He bravely fought alone before being arrested and killed. He is buried in Kūfah.

Muslim ibn ʻAwsajah (d. 61/680): A prominent figure of piety, knowledge, and wealth in Kūfah, who had met the Prophet. He was among those who wrote to Imām Ḥusayn, inviting him to come to Kūfah to lead them against Yazīd. He joined the Imām and was killed in Karbalā'.

Nāfiʻ ibn Hilāl (d. 61/680): A reciter of the Qur'ān and a prominent figure of knowledge, wealth, and courage. He was a companion of Imām ʻAlī who participated in his battles. He joined Imām Ḥusayn in the way between Mecca and Karbalā'. He was a brilliant archer and fought bravely in Karbalā' before breaking his arms and thus being arrested and killed by Shimr.

Nayyir Tabrīzī (Ḥujjat al-Islām), Muḥammad Taqī (1248-1330)/1832-1911): Shaykhiyyah scholar and traditionalist, and an adept poet of Persian, (Azeri) Turkish, and Arabic.

Qays ibn al-Ashʻath ibn Qays (d. 66/686): He wrote to Imām Ḥusayn inviting him to come to Kūfah, but then he changed sides and became one of the commanders of Yazīd's army. He plundered the Imām's fur cloak.

Qays ibn Mushar al-Ṣaydāwī (d. 60/680): A dedicated friend and follower of the Household of the Prophet. He was a courier and messenger between the people of Kūfah, Imām Ḥusayn, and Muslim ibn ʻAqīl, who traveled back and forth several times. He was arrested in Qādisiyyah, while carrying the Imām's letter, and was sent to Ibn Ziyād in Kūfah. Ibn Ziyād

ordered him to climb on the pulpit and curse the Imām, only to find him praising the Imām and his parents, and cursing Ibn Ziyād and his father. Thus he was thrown down from the government building and became a martyr.

Sahl ibn Sa'd al-Sā'idī (d. 91/710): A companion of the Prophet, who lived about a hundred years. He is buried in Medina.

Ṣāliḥ ibn Wahab (d. 66/686): He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalā', and hit the side of the Imām by a spear. He was among the ten people who galloped their horses over the body of the Imām, for which they received a little reward from Ibn Ziyād, but a ruthless retaliation from Mukhtār.

Shabath ibn Rib'ī (d. c. 80/699): A companion of Imām 'Alī, who became a head of the Khārijites, from which he repented later on. He wrote to Imām Ḥusayn inviting him to come to Kūfah, but then he changed sides and commanded the infantry division of Yazīd's army in Karbalā'. He then joined Mukhtār to avenge the blood of Ḥusayn.

Sha'rānī, Abū al-Ḥasan (1320-93/1902-73): A pious and prolific Shī'ite scholar who was an expert in a wide variety of Islamic sciences. He is particularly notable for editing, translating, and writing glosses for many well-known Shī'ite books. He is buried in Rayy.

Shimr ibn Dhū al-Jawshan, Shuraḥbīl (d. 66/686): A companion of Imām 'Alī, who fought in his army and was wounded in the battle of Ṣiffīn. He was a main general in Yazīd's army, and is said to have been the person who decapitated Imām Ḥusayn. He was killed by Mukhtār's army.

Sinān ibn Anas: One of the army generals of Yazīd's army in Karbalā', who, unlike others, showed no reluctance to approach and attack Imām Ḥusayn when he was dying. According to some histories, he was the person who killed the Imām and cut off his head.

Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī (2 BH – 76 AH/620-95): A close companion of the first four Shī'ite Imāms, who fought in the bat-

tles of Imām ʻAlī. He kept company of many prominent companions of the Prophet and gathered many traditions and historical accounts from them concerning the Household of the Prophet and Shīʻite doctrines. Thus he composed the first book in Islam after the Holy Qur'ān. He escaped from Ḥajjāj's prosecution, and died in Nawbandajān near Shīrāz.

ʻUbayd-Allāh ibn Ziyād (d. 65/685): One of the governors of Muʻāwiyah and Yazīd in Khurāsān, Basra, and Kūfah, who became known for his oppression and cruelty. He killed many prominent companions of Imām ʻAlī, and was the main authority in ordering the death of Imām Ḥusayn. He was killed by Mukhtār's army.

ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (c. 40 BH – 23 AH/581-644): The second caliph, and the first person to be titled Amīr al-Mu'minīn. The Islamic territory greatly expanded during his caliphate as a result of several Muslim conquests. He is buried in Medina.

ʻUmar ibn Saʻd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (d. 66/686): A man of authority and religious influence, as he was the son of the famous companion and conqueror, Saʻd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ. He was an ambitious person, and urged his father to claim caliphate after the battle of Ṣiffīn, which he refused. He was ordered by Ibn Ziyād to fight against Imām Ḥusayn, which he refused at the beginning, but then accepted in order to acquire the government of Rayy. He was killed by Mukhtār's army.

Umm-i Kulthūm bint ʻAlī (8-62/629-82): The second daughter and the fourth and last child of Imām ʻAlī and Fāṭimah. It is highly controversial whether she was the same as Zaynab bint ʻAlī, let alone the accounts of her marriage to ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. She is said to have attended Karbalā', and has a mausoleum in Syria.

ʻUthmān ibn ʻAffān (c. 47 BH – 35 AH/574-656): The third caliph, whose caliphate set the grounds for the Umayyad dynasty. He was married to two of the Prophet's daughters (one at a time). He is buried in Medina.

Walīd ibn ʿUtbah (d. 64/684): Yazīd's cousin and the governor of Medina for three years. He refused to accept the caliphate after Yazīd's son, Muʿāwiyah.

Yazīd ibn al-Ḥārith (d. 68/688): A companion of Imām ʿAlī and one of his army generals in the battle of Ṣiffīn. He wrote to Imām Ḥusayn inviting him to come to Kūfah, but then he changed sides and joined the army of Yazīd.

Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah (25-64/646-83): Despite being a corrupt person and openly committing major sins, his father chose him as heir to the caliph during his caliphate. He ordered the death of Imām Ḥusayn in the first year of his caliphate in 61 AH (680 CE), the massacre of Medina in 63 (683), and the destruction of the Kaʿbah by catapult in 64 (683). He is buried in Damascus.

Zayd ibn Arqam (d. 68/688): A companion of the Prophet and a supporter of Imām ʿAlī who fought with him in the battle of Ṣiffīn.

Zaynab bint ʿAlī (c. 6-62/627-82): The sister of Imām Ḥusayn and the wife of ʿAbd-Allāh ibn Jaʿfar. Having a father like ʿAlī and a mother like Fāṭimah, she was very knowledgeable and eloquent, and used to have classes of Qurʾānic exegesis (*tafsīr*) for ladies. She looked after the womenfolk of Imām Ḥusayn and his army throughout their journey from Karbalāʾ to Damascus, as the fourth Imām was extremely ill. She has a mausoleum in Syria.

Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn (d. 61/680): He was a follower of the third caliph ʿUthmān. He met Imām Ḥusayn when he was returning from the *ḥajj* and the Imām was heading for Kūfah. There he was transformed, joined the Imām, and became one of his top supporters and a martyr in Karbalāʾ.

Zurʿah ibn Sharīk al-Tamīmī (d. 66/686): He was in Yazīd's army in Karbalāʾ, and was killed by Mukhtār's army later on.

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